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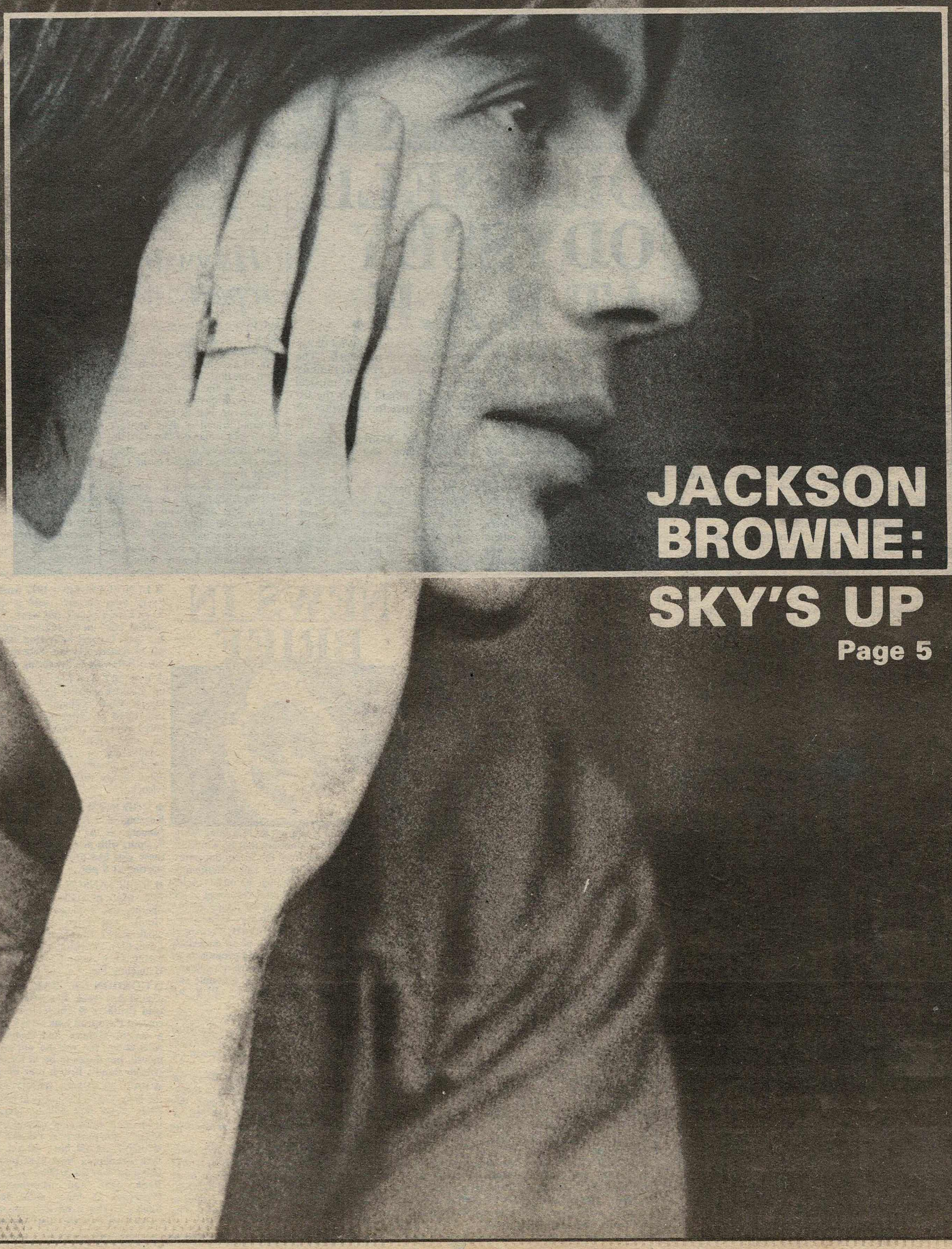


JACKSON BROWNE: SKY'S UP
Page 5

Pic: PENNIE SMITH

SEX PISTOLS LATEST

London gigs are off — only 4 dates left

THE SEX PISTOLS' package tour has been further decimated by more cancellations, and now only four gigs remain in their itinerary. Biggest blow is the scrapping of their two major London concerts, which should have opened at the new Roxy Theatre in Harlesden on December 26 and 27.

And with The Damned now out of the package, the current bill consists of the Pistols, The Clash and Johnny Thunder's Heartbreakers. Remaining dates are at Birmingham Bingley Hall (December 20), Plymouth Woods Leisure Centre (21 and 23) and Paignton Penelope's (22). However, at presstime there was still some doubt as to whether the Heartbreakers would fulfil these bookings, as Thunder told NME at the weekend that he "is thinking of going home".

Pistols' manager Malcolm McClaren told NME he was "thoroughly disgusted" with the attitude of people involved in the British music scene, who wanted to suppress the new wave of punk bands. He claimed that, if the Pistols capitulated now, it would deter emerging young talent. This, he added, would kill rock'n'roll.

● Terry Collins, licensee of the Roxy Theatre, explained his decision to pull out of the Pistols dates. He told NME: "They booked rehearsal time at the Roxy, so I went along to assess them, and I was horrified by their attitude which was absolutely disgusting. I may say that this was before their infamous TV interview".

He also alleged that they had caused "considerable backstage damage", and added that he finally cancelled the Pistols gigs because he "did not want to condone their attitude".

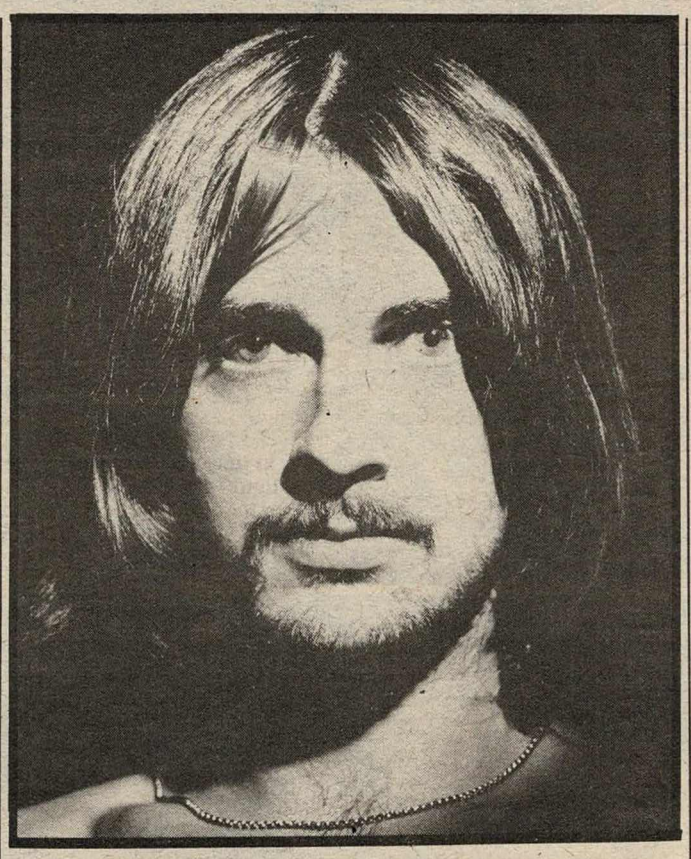
Collins' decision means that the 1,500-seater Roxy will not now be opening during the Christmas holiday period. "There are still certain renovations to be completed", he said. "And we can now afford to take our time over these, with a view to opening during the second half of January. We are negotiating acts for this period. Meanwhile, of course, the venue is already open as a rehearsal centre."

● A statement was issued this week by Stiff Records on behalf of The Damned. It says: "Following reports stating that the Sex Pistols have fired The Damned due to various oblique reasons, confirmation is given that The Damned will not be appearing at any more of the Pistols' dates. No further dates are planned at the present for the group. They will instead return to the studio to complete their first album with producer Nick Lowe, which Stiff plan to release early in the New Year".

The situation arose when the four acts in the package were asked to perform for Derby councillors, who wished to assess whether or not their scheduled show at the King's Hall should go ahead. The Pistols, Clash and Heartbreakers all refused, but The Damned were apparently willing to do so, thus antagonising the other three acts. The Derby concert was, in fact, cancelled.

● Second link man to be suspended over the Pistols controversy was Radio Luxembourg d-j Tony Prince. He wanted to interview the band live on his show last Saturday, but 208 executives insisted on the spot being pre-recorded. Prince refused to accept this, and was immediately suspended.

● The Vibrators — who were originally booked for, and subsequently dropped from, the Pistols package — say they are still feeling the backlash of the Pistols controversy. But they have managed to salvage gigs at London Holloway Lord Nelson (December 22) and Middlesborough Rock Garden (23 and 24). They now hope that their European tour will go ahead after all in the New Year, after which they will attempt to set up a British tour.



OLDFIELD ODYSSEY AT R.A.H.

DAVID BEDFORD has assembled an impressive line-up of top musicians for the first public performance of his work "The Odyssey", to be staged at London Royal Albert Hall on January 25. Already released as an album by Virgin, it is a musical adaptation of Homer's epic poem. Mike Oldfield heads the list of guests and, making his first stage appearance for 2½ years, he will be featured on guitar.

On the LP version, Bedford plays all the keyboard parts, but five other keyboards men have been recruited for the concert — Vangelis, ex-Deep Purple stalwart Jon Lord, Soft Machine founder member Mike Ratledge, Camel's Peter Bardens and Bedford's brother Steuart. Among others appearing are Gong percussionist Pierre Moerlen, singer Sophie Dixon, the 30-strong Queen's College Choir and a 20-piece orchestra.

The first part of the programme will involve solos from some of the principals, including Jon Lord, who will feature extracts from his new album "Sarabande". Tickets are now on sale priced £3, £2.75, £1.75, £1.25 and £1.

Slik: New Year tour

SILK are going out on an extensive tour in the New Year, and they will be concentrating on club and ballroom venues — where, explains their manager, people can afford to see them. He adds: "We are anxious not to be the sort of band who are inaccessible to the public. This way we are able to keep ticket prices down."

Dates so far confirmed, with more to be added, are: Buckley Tivoli (January 13), Hereford Focus Cinema (14), Fishguard Frenchman's Motel (15)., Swansea Top Rank (16), Chatham Central Hall (22), Cardiff Top Rank (26), Torquay 400 Club (27), Barnstaple Chequers Club (28), Plymouth Woods Centre (February 2), Yeovil Johnson Hall (3), Hastings Pier Pavilion (4), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (12), Birmingham Barbarella's (16), Colwyn Bay Dixieland Showbar (17), Carlisle Market Hall (20), Hawick Town Hall (21) and Douglas I.o.M. Palace Lido (24). Support act for the whole tour is Screemer.

Slik's subsequent plans for the New Year include tours of Europe, Japan and Australia. Their new single "Don't Take Your Love Away" is currently on release.

Jenny Haan's band on road

JENNY HAAN, former lead singer with Babe Ruth, sets out on her first tour next month with her new band Lion. They have signed a recording deal with EMI, who release their debut single in January, followed by an album in February. With Jenny on vocals, the band's line-up comprises Dave Hewitt (bass), Chris Wade (guitar), Geoff Layton-Bennett (drums) and Gren Fraser (guitar).

Full dates list next week.

Outlaws cancel

AS NME went to press, we learned that The Outlaws have cancelled their projected British visit. Full details next week.

'Hayward joins 10cc' reports are denied

WIDESPREAD rumours in rock circles suggesting that Justin Hayward of the Moody Blues is to join 10 c.c., have been denied by both parties. The stories were sparked by the fact that Hayward is a director of 10 c.c.'s Strawberry Studios, as well as being a close personal friend of Eric Stewart. But a spokesman for Hayward this week dismissed the reports, which had even been printed in the U.S. music press.

Commented 10 c.c. manager Harvey Lisberg: "It's possible that Justin may guest with Eric and Graham on their new album, which is now half-completed. But I've no reason to believe that he will be joining them permanently. I expect drummer Paul Burgess to be a member of the new-look 10 c.c. — he's played with them before, of course — but their main need at the moment is for a good keyboards player."

It seems unlikely, however, that Hayward will be re-joining John Lodge in another "Bluejays" venture. He is at present completing a solo album and is getting a new band together, while Lodge is understood to be working with ex Faces drummer Kenny Jones. There is equally little chance of the Moody Blues reuniting in the foreseeable future, according to a spokesman for Threshold Records.

Briton's festival win

CHRYSALIS artist John Dawson Read received a major boost to his career when he took first prize in the 36-nation Istanbul Popular Song Contest in Turkey, with his self-penned "The Telephone". Grand Prize went to Oscar Harris, an American working out of Holland. Tony Paiton, representing Jamaica went to third with hes self-penned "Love Me" — and he also collected the Press Award for the best performance. Atlantic Records chief Ahmet Ertegun, who was chairman of the judges, donated £80,000 to the Turkish Earthquake Disaster Fund — and he is also lining up a string of concerts by Neil Sedaka for the same charity.

JOHN DAWSON READ

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NEWS IN BRIEF

● LINDISFARNE have sold out their two reunion concerts at Newcastle City Hall on December 22 and 23. Consequently an additional early evening show has been arranged on the second night December 23 at 6pm. The band's comeback, which is only for these gigs in their home town, will be filmed by BBC-TV for subsequent transmission.

● BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST have been forced to postpone their European tour, which should have been taking place this month. This is because their lead vocalist and guitarist has collapsed, suffering from physical exhaustion. The band now plan to re-schedule the entire tour for early next year.

● OUR KID have been banned from appearing in three major TV shows during the Christmas-New Year period. They were originally granted licences to do so, but these have now been revoked by Liverpool Education Committee, who are not satisfied with the group's attendance record at school.

● THE RUBETTES have been added to the bill of the Daily Mirror British Pop Awards concert, which is being staged at Stafford Bingley Hall on Saturday, January 8. As previously reported, David Essex tops the bill, and others appearing include John Miles and the Real Thing. The Rubettes' new single "Baby I Know" is released by State on January 7.

● J.A.L.N. BAND, the Birmingham funk band who recently scored in the charts with their single "Disco Music (I Like It)", have augmented their line-up by bringing in a three-piece brass and woodwind section. New members are Laurie Brown (trumpet), Rob Goodale (trombone) and Alan Holmes (sax, flute and clarinet).

● LITTLE FEAT are being negotiated for a British tour in the New Year, but so far no definite period has been arranged for their visit. A spokesman for promoter Alec Leslie told NME: "They have already rejected five different periods which we have suggested. We are now awaiting their reply to our sixth offer!"

● ELTON JOHN turns disc-jockey when he hosts his own two-hour Radio 1 show on Boxing Day (Monday, December 27) at 1.30pm. The following day (28) on the same channel at 12.45pm, Abba are showcased in their own 75-minute programme.

● IAN HUNTER will not be re-joining Mott, despite widespread rumours that he would be doing so, stemming from the recent departure of the band's lead singer Nigel Benjamin. Instead, Hunter is forming an outfit of his own, with whom he will start recording in the New Year. An album will be issued in the spring, coinciding with the band's debut tour.

● EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER return to the concert platform by way of an American tour in the spring. This will aid promotion of their new album, planned for March release, which will be either a triple or a double set. British and European dates by ELP are expected later in 1977.

● RORY GALLAGHER has cancelled one of the dates in his previously-reported British tour schedule. It was to have been at Reading University on January 22. No replacement gig has yet been announced.

● U.F.O. play their first British dates for several months when they headline a three-night stint at London Marquee Coub this Saturday, Sunday and Monday (18-20). A nationwide tour is being lined up for the New Year.

● RACING CARS have added four pre-Christmas gigs to their current tour itinerary. They visit Barry Memorial Hall (December 20), Rhondda Sports Centre (21) and Newport Stowaway Club (22), followed by a special party night at London Kensington The Nashville (23).

● LED ZEPPELIN's 1977 world tour will be "very long indeed", said a spokesman for Swan Song Records this week. There is still no official word on the running order of the tour, but there is every indication that Zep will kick off in America in late February, with British dates following in the spring or early summer.

● BANDIT — a new rock outfit whose line-up includes vocalist Jim Diamond, ex-Home bassist Cliff Williams and guitarist James Litherland — make their first major appearances as guests of Manfred Mann's Earthband on their three concerts this weekend, culminating at London New Victoria on Sunday. Bandit have just completed their debut album with Thin Lizzy producer John Alcock.

● ROD STEWART's six concerts at London Kensington Olympia (December 21-24 and January 14-15) will now all commence at 7.30pm, with doors opening at 6.30. Some of these gigs had previously been announced as starting at 8 pm.

● BERT JANSCH opens the new Pathfinder Folk Club in Staines on January 6. It will operate every Thursday at the Pack Horse Hotel, and other bookings include Rab Noakes (13), Five Hand Reel (20) and Magna Carta (27). Provisional February bookings are Stefan Grossman, Dave Cousins, Alba and Hedgehog Pie.

● GORDON GILTRAP — whose band was named last week as replacement for Sutherland Brothers & Quiver on Wishbone Ash's current European tour - was knocked down by a car in Geneva and sustained a broken collarbone. He will be out of action for a month, but hopes to be fit for the start of the Giltrap Band's British tour on January 14.

● PAT TRAVERS BAND are to headline the New Year's Eve party at London Marquee Club, when they will be featuring material from their upcoming second album "Makin' Magic", for release by Polydor early in 1977.

● LONE STAR have set the first dates for their headlining New Year tour. They are at Brighton Top Rank (January 19), Cardiff Top Rank (25) and Manchester University (February 5). Many more dates are being finalised. The band also appear in BBC-2's "Old Grey Whistle Test" on January 4.

News Desk

Edited: Derek Johnson

SAHB TOUR without Alex, then with him!

THE SENSATIONAL Alex Harvey Band are going out on a British tour early in the New Year without leader Alex Harvey, who is still convalescing from his collapse earlier this autumn. First date to be confirmed is at Newcastle Mayfair on February 18, and the remainder of their itinerary will be announced next week. It is anticipated that Alex will have recovered completely by early spring, when he plans to re-join the band for a major concert tour, dates for which are at present being pencilled in — including two nights at Manchester Belle Vue on April 16 and 17.

BEACH BOYS: SPRING VISIT

IT NOW SEEMS certain that the Beach Boys will be touring Britain in April, according to our U.S. correspondent. All attempts to bring them over this year have been thwarted, partly because of their heavy commitments in the States, and partly due to the uncertainty of the Pound's value against the Dollar. But now that the Pound appears to have stabilised, negotiations are well in hand to bring the group over. "They very much want to visit Britain, and discussions are revolving around the April period," says our correspondent.

McGarrigles in February

THE McGARRIGLES return to Britain in the New Year for a headlining tour, following the success of their debut visit in the summer — when they appeared in the outdoor July Wakes Festival and played a couple of indoor concerts. The Canadian duo, comprising sisters Kate and Anna McGarrigle, kick off at Belfast Queen's University on February 8, then visit three venues in Eire.

Other dates are at Manchester Opera House (16), Leeds University (17), Liverpool Philharmonic Hall (18), London New Victoria Theatre (19), Bournemouth Winter Gardens (21), Birmingham Town Hall (22), Aylesbury Friars at Vale Hall (23), Croydon Fairfield Hall (25) and Bristol Colston Hall (27).

Tickets for the London show are on sale now, priced £2.50, £2 and £1.50; box-offices elsewhere open in January, but postal bookings will be accepted right away, with prices ranging from £2.25 to £1. The girls will be supported on the tour by Pat Donaldson (bass), Dave Mattacks (drums) and Chaim Tannenbaum (guitar and harmonica).

The McGarrigles' new album "Dancer With Bruised Knees" is released by Warner Brothers on February 25, featuring John Cale as guest organist and bassist. And they are set to appear in BBC-2's "Old Grey Whistle Test" on February 15.

More by Stylistics

THE STYLISTICS have added a further string of dates to their British tour itinerary — which, as reported two weeks ago, opens in Manchester on March 13 and includes a major London concert at the Royal Albert Hall on March 22. Additional bookings are at Leicester De Montfort Hall (March 27), Stoke Jollees Club (28-April 2), Birmingham Odeon (April 6), Liverpool Empire (7), Luton Cesar's (10-16), Croydon Fairfield Hall (17) and Luton Cesar's again (25-May 1). Still more gigs have yet to be added to their schedule.

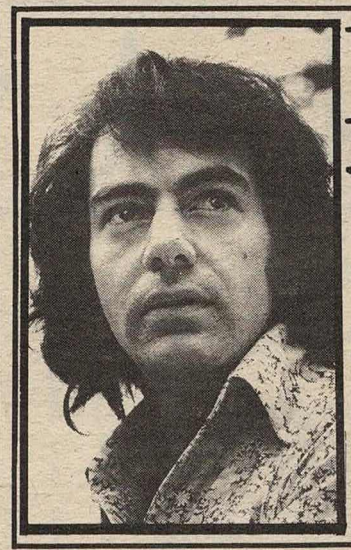
The new-look GENESIS featuring (left to right) STEVE HACKETT, TONY BANKS, new drummer CHESTER THOMPSON, MIKE RUTHERFORD and PHIL COLLINS

Genesis tickets: Rainbow deluged

NME has received many enquiries from readers regarding tickets for the three Genesis concerts at London Rainbow Theatre on January 1, 2 and 3. As a result, the band and promoter Harvey Goldsmith have issued a statement explaining the position.

Over 80,000 ticket applications have been received for the 8,000 seats available, and this in itself — coupled with delays in the Christmas post — has caused a hold-up in dealing with the vast volume of mail.

Goldsmith says that all unsuccessful applications have now been returned with money refunds. Anyone who has not received money back is in line for tickets and will be hearing shortly. This lapse is to enable cheques to be cleared — a necessary precaution, adds Goldsmith, because some have already bounced!



Diamond playing Woburn Abbey?

NEIL DIAMOND is in line to play a major open-air concert, to be staged during June in the grounds of Woburn Abbey, stately home of the Duke of Bedford. And world boxing champion John Conteh is being sought for an important fight, possibly even defending his title, at the same event. It is not yet clear if the Diamond concert and the Conteh fight would take place on the same programme, or if they would be staged on successive days.

The Woburn event will be part of next year's celebrations to mark the Silver Jubilee of the Queen's accession. Diamond is expected to undertake several other appearances in this country in June — all at outdoor venues — and it is likely that one of his shows will be at the massive Wembley Stadium.

Jethro Tull February tour

JETHRO TULL are to play a string of British concert dates in February, their first in this country since late 1974. They visit Aberdeen Capitol (February 1), Glasgow Apollo Centre (2), Newcastle City Hall (3), Manchester Ardwick ABC Theatre (5), Birmingham Odeon (6), Liverpool Empire (7), Southampton Gaumont (9), London Hammersmith Odeon (11 and 12) and Bristol Colston Hall (14). It is possible that one or two more gigs may be added to this schedule.

Tickets are now on sale at the respective box-offices; at Hammersmith they are priced at £3, £2.50 and £2; and at all other venues prices are £2.80, £2.20 and £1.75. The band's new album "Songs From The Wood" is released by Chrysalis on February 4 to coincide with the tour. As previously reported, the band are also to be featured in the new "In Concert" series transmitted simultaneously by BBC-2 and Radio 1, and Tull's showcase is provisionally set for February 19 airing.

CLAPTON CALLS OFF XMAS GIGS

ERIC CLAPTON has pulled out of three concerts which had been lined up for him at London Hammersmith Odeon on December 21, 22 and 23. Promoter Harvey Goldsmith told NME: "I really thought it was going ahead, and I was all set to put the tickets on sale, but it fell through at the last moment." No official reason has been given, but a contributory factor was probably that not all the members of Clapton's regular band were available. He is now expected to play British dates in the New Year. The cancellation means that, for the first time in several years, the Hammersmith Odeon is without a pre-Christmas rock show.

LOFGREN DELAY

NILS LOFGREN has postponed his British concert tour, which had been expected to take place in March, until the summer. Promoter Ian Wright of MAM said that Lofgren is now expected to visit this country in July. It is believed that the main reason for the delay is that Lofgren is keen to be involved in one or two of next summer's major open-air events.

Harper & Chips

ROY HARPER is to tour Britain with his new band early in 1977. Known as Harper & Chips, they will be going on the road in mid-February, although it is stressed that no gigs have yet been confirmed. The tour will mark Harper's return to the British stage after an absence abroad lasting almost two years.

Line-up of the band comprises Henry McCullough and Andy Roberts (guitars), Dave Cochran (bass) and John Halsey (drums). Harper's new album "Bull In A Ming Vase" is released by Harvest on February 4. In addition to the regular members of his band, guest musicians on the LP include Alvin Lee, Ronnie Lane, Steve Broughton, Dave Lawson and Jimmy McCulloch.

RECORDING NEWS

Rebel MacKay's solo

DUNCAN MacKAY, Cockney Rebel's keyboards player, has his debut solo album released by EMI in February. Titled "Score", it was co-produced by MacKay and ex-Uriah Heep bassist John Wetton. Among musicians on the set are drummer Andrew McCulloch (ex-King Crimson and Greenslade) and bassist Clive Chaman (ex-Jeff Beck and currently with Hummingbird). The album comprises nine self-penned tracks, four of them with lyrics by Steve Harley, who also sings on one of the numbers. Wetton takes three of the numbers, and the other five are instrumental.

A suggestion that MacKay will leave Rebel, if his album proves successful, has been denied by EMI. The company says that he will remain with Harley, but would also undertake his own live work and pursue a parallel solo career. MacKay has been with Rebel for two years, since Harley disbanded the original line-up in September, 1974.

● The last single from the Polydor group this year is "Long Hard Ride" by the **Marshall Tucker Band.** And Phonogram's final album of 1976 is "The Best Of B.T.O. So Far" by **Bachman Turner Overdrive** on Mercury. Both releases are rushed out this week.

● **Dennis Wilson** of the Beach Boys has signed a solo recording deal with the Caribou Records company, and his debut album is scheduled for February release. He will, of course, also continue to record with the Beach Boys.

● **Sea Level,** the splinter group from the Allman Brothers Band, have their debut album issued by Polydor in February. This will be followed by solo albums from **Greg Allman** in March and **Richard Betts** in May.

● The previously-reported EP by French band **Little Bob Story** has been delayed by a sound loss fault on the master tape. This has now been rectified, and Chiswick Records hope to have it in the shops by this weekend.

● Polydor are to launch a heavy promotion campaign on British all-girl rock band **Brandy** in the New Year. This will coincide with the girls' self-penned single "Ooya", to be followed by their debut album.

● The first album from the **Streetwalkers** since their major personnel changes is released by Phonogram on January 20. Title is "Vicious But Fair".

● **Gary Glitter's** first new single since his "retirement" early this year is issued by Arista on December 31. Titled "It Takes All Night Long", it was written by Glitter and Mike Leander, and was recorded last month in Paris.

● **Carole King** has left A & M Records and has signed a long-term contract with the Capitol label, who will release her latest album early in the New Year.

● **Hedgehog Pie** are releasing an EP on Rubber Records containing three songs from "The Lambton Worm", the play in which they are appearing throughout December and January at Newcastle University Theatre.

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FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending — 15th December, 1971.

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1	1	ERNIE	Benny Hill (Columbia)
2	2	JEEPSTER	T. Rex (Fly)
3	3	TOKOLOSHIE MAN	John Kongos (Fly)
6	4	THEME FROM "SHAFT"	
10	5	NO MATTER HOW I TRY	Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
4	6	GYPSIES, TRAMPS & THIEVES	Cher (MCA)
5	7	COS I LUV YOU	Slade (Polydor)
11	8	SOMETHING TELLS ME	Cilla Black (Parlophone)
9	9	BANKS OF THE OHIO	Olivia Newton-John (Pye)
19	10	SOFTLY WHISPERING I LOVE YOU	Congregation (Columbia)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending — 17th December, 1966.

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	GREEN GREEN GRASS OF HOME	Tom Jones (Decca)
2	2	WHAT WOULD I BE	Val Doonican (Decca)
5	3	MORNINGTOWN RIDE	Seekers (Columbia)
3	4	GOOD VIBRATIONS	Beach Boys (Capitol)
4	5	MY MIND'S EYE	Small Faces (Decca)
9	6	WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKEN-HEARTED	Jimmy Ruffin (Tamla Motown)
12	7	YOU KEEP ME HANGIN' ON	Supremes (Tamla Motown)
17	7	SUNSHINE SUPERMAN	Donovan (Pye)
6	9	GIMME SOME LOVING	Spencer Davis Group (Fontana)
8	10	DEAD END STREET	Kinks (Pye)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending — December 15th, 1961.

Last Week	This Week		
1	1	TOWER OF STRENGTH	Frankie Vaughan (Philips)
2	2	MOON RIVER	Danny Williams (HMV)
3	3	TAKE GOOD CARE OF MY BABY	Bobby Vee (London)
11	4	STRANGER ON THE SHORE	Acker Bilk (Columbia)
8	5	MIDNIGHT IN MOSCOW	Kenny Ball (Pye)
7	6	I'LL GET BY	Shirley Bassey (Columbia)
17	7	JOHNNY WILL	Pat Boone (London)
—	8	LET THERE BE DRUMS	Sandy Nelson (London)
4	8	HIS LATEST FLAME	Elvis Presley (London)
5	10	TAKE FIVE	Dave Brubeck (Fontana)

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS C·H·A·R·T·S

SINGLES

Week ending December 18, 1976

This Week	Last Week			Weeks Charts	Highest Position
1	(1)	UNDER THE MOON OF LOVE	Showaddywaddy (Bell)	6	1
2	(5)	MONEY MONEY MONEY	Abba (Epic)	4	2
3	(7)	WHEN A CHILD IS BORN	Johnny Mathis (CBS)	4	3
4	(2)	SOMEBODY TO LOVE	Queen (EMI)	4	2
5	(3)	LIVIN' THING	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	5	3
6	(4)	LOVE ME	Yvonne Elliman (RSO)	6	4
7	(6)	IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW	Chicago (CBS)	10	1
8	(14)	PORTSMOUTH	Mike Oldfield (Virgin)	3	8
9	(—)	STOP ME (IF YOU'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE)	Billy Ocean (GTO)	4	9
10	(9)	LEAN ON ME	Mud (Private Stock)	3	9
11	(17)	LIVING NEXT DOOR TO ALICE	Smokie (Rak)	2	11
12	(10)	GET BACK	Rod Stewart (Riva)	4	10
13	(8)	YOU MAKE ME FEEL LIKE DANCING	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	7	2
14	(13)	SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD	Elton John (Rocket)	5	13
15	(15)	LITTLE DOES SHE KNOW	Kursaal Flyers (CBS)	4	15
16	(11)	LOST IN FRANCE	Bonnie Tyler (RCA)	7	5
17	(21)	DOCTOR LOVE	Tina Charles (CBS)	2	17
18	(12)	IF NOT YOU	Dr. Hook (Capitol)	7	4
19	(19)	FAIRY TALE	Dana (GTO)	4	19
20	(—)	WILD SIDE OF LIFE	Status Quo (Vertigo)	1	20
21	(26)	GRANDMA'S PARTY	Paul Nicholas (RSO)	2	21
22	(25)	BIONIC SANTA	Chris Hill (Philips)	2	22
23	(—)	THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE	10c.c. Mercury)	1	23
24	(16)	ROCK 'N' ME	Steve Miller Band (Mercury)	6	10
25	(27)	YOU'LL NEVER GET TO HEAVEN	Stylistics (H&L)	3	25
26	(18)	MISSISSIPPI	Pussycat (Sonet)	16	1
27	(24)	DON'T MAKE ME WAIT TOO LONG	Barry White (20th Century)	5	21
28	(—)	HAITIAN DIVORCE	Steely Dan (ABC)	1	28
29	(29)	HEY MR. DREAM MAKER	Cliff Richard (EMI)	2	29
30	(23)	SUBSTITUTE	The Who (Polydor)	17	7

BUBBLING UNDER

SING ME AN OLD FASHIONED SONG - Billy Jo Spears (United Artists); THE CHAMPION — Willie Mitchell (London); RING OUT SOLSTICE — Jethro Tull (Chrysalis); SAVE ME — Clodagh Rodgers (Polydor); ANARCHY IN THE UK — Sex Pistols (EMI).

ALBUMS

Week ending December 18, 1976

This Week	Last Week			Weeks Charts	Highest Position
1	(1)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Glen Campbell (Capitol)	6	1
2	(2)	ARRIVAL	Abba (Epic)	5	2
3	(5)	22 GOLDEN GREATS	Bert Weedon (Warwick)	7	3
4	(7)	THE GREATEST HITS	Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons (K-Tel)	6	4
5	(4)	100 GOLDEN GREATS	Max Bygraves (Ronco)	7	4
6	(3)	SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE	Stevie Wonder (EMI)	10	1
7	(6)	ABBA GREATEST HITS	(Epic)	38	1
8	(12)	DISCO ROCKET	(K-Tel)	3	8
9	(26)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	3	9
10	(8)	HOT CHOCOLATE GREATEST HITS	(Rak)	5	8
11	(20)	DAVID SOUL	(Private Stock)	3	11
12	(—)	A DAY AT THE RACES	Queen (EMI)	1	12
13	(9)	BLUE MOVES	Elton John (Rocket)	8	4
14	(14)	THE WHO STORY	(Polydor)	11	1
15	(17)	FOREVER AND EVER	Demis Roussos (Philips)	25	2
16	(10)	20 ORIGINAL DEAN MARTIN HITS	(Reprise	5	10
17	(22)	THOUGHTS OF LOVE	Shirley Bassey (United Artists)	2	17
18	(11)	THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME	Led Zeppelin (Swansong)	8	5
19	(18)	BEST OF STYLISTICS VOL II	(Avco)	14	3
20	(15)	SOUL MOTION	(K-Tel)	10	2
21	(21)	A LITTLE BIT MORE	Dr. Hook (Capitol)	22	4
22	(19)	FRAMPTON COMES ALIVE	Peter Frampton (A&M)	28	6
23	(—)	DEREK AND CLIVE LIVE	Peter Cook & Dudley Moore (Island)	9	13
24	(—)	SHOWADDYWADDY GREATEST HITS	(Arista)	1	24
25	(—)	THE INCREDIBLE PLAN	Max Boyce (EMI)	3	25
26	(16)	CHICAGO X	(CBS)	6	16
27	(28)	ALL THIS AND WORLD WAR II	(Riva)	4	21
28	(24)	SOUNDS OF GLORY	(Arcade)	3	19
29	(23)	ENDLESS FLIGHT	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	2	23
30	(27)	A NIGHT ON THE TOWN	Rod Stewart (Riva)	26	1

BUBBLING UNDER

SOME MORE OF ME POEMS AND SONGS — Pam Ayres (Galaxy); 44 SUPERSTARS (K-Tel); BOXED — Mike Oldfield (Virgin); HEJIRA — Joni Mitchell (Asylum); DEVINE TIME — Sydney Devine (Philips).

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending December 18, 1976

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT	Rod Stewart
2	(5)	YOU MAKE ME FEEL LIKE DANCING	Leo Sayer
3	(4)	THE RUBBERBAND MAN	Spinners
4	(6)	YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A STAR	Marilyn McCoo & Billy Davis
5	(3)	LOVE SO RIGHT	Bee Gees
6	(8)	STAND TALL	Burton Cummings
7	(2)	MUSKRAT LOVE	Captain & Tennille
8	(12)	AFTER THE LOVIN'	Engelbert Humperdinck
9	(11)	SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD	Elton John
10	(10)	NIGHTS ARE FOREVER	England Dan & John Ford Coley
11	(13)	LIVIN' THING	ELO
12	(15)	DAZZ	Brick
13	(14)	LOVE ME	Yvonne Elliman
14	(17)	HOT LINE	Sylvers
15	(7)	NADIA'S THEME	Barry DeVorzon & Perry Botkin Jr.
16	(19)	CAR WASH	Rose Royce
17	(9)	I NEVER CRY	Alice Cooper
18	(16)	MORE THAN A FEELING	Boston
19	(28)	I WISH	Stevie Wonder
20	(18)	YOU ARE THE WOMAN	Firefall
21	(29)	SOMEBODY TO LOVE	Queen
22	(26)	JEANS ON	David Dundas
23	(20)	BETH	Kiss
24	(22)	LOVE BALLAD	LTD
25	(—)	WALK THIS WAY	Aerosmith
26	(24)	THE WRECK OF THE EDMUND FITZGERALD	Gordon Lightfoot
27	(21)	ROCK'N'ME	Steve Miller Band
28	(30)	HELLO OLD FRIEND	Eric Clapton
29	(—)	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS	Mary MacGregor
30	(—)	I LIKE DREAMING	Kenny Nolan

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

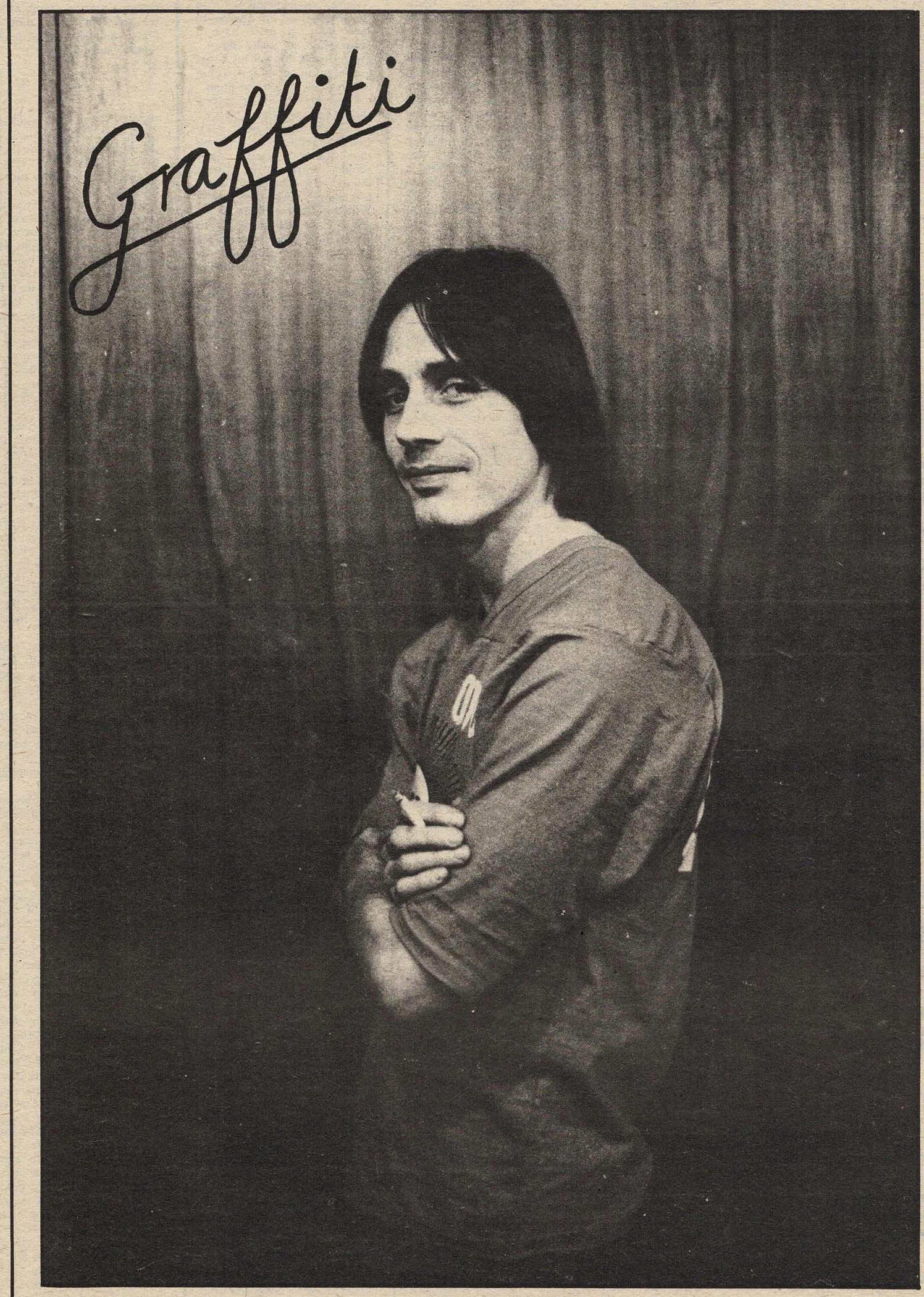
U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending December 18, 1976

This Week	Last Week		
1	(1)	SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE	Stevie Wonder
2	(2)	BOSTON	
3	(3)	A NIGHT ON THE TOWN	Rod Stewart
4	(4)	FRAMPTON COMES ALIVE	Peter Frampton
5	(7)	THE PRETENDER	Jackson Browne
6	(6)	SPIRIT	Earth, Wind & Fire
7	(9)	BEST OF THE DOOBIES	Doobie Brothers
8	(8)	BLUE MOVES	Elton John
9	(12)	ROCK AND ROLL OVER	Kiss
10	(11)	A NEW WORLD RECORD	Electric Light Orchestra
11	(10)	FLY LIKE AN EAGLE	Steve Miller Band
12	(5)	THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME	Led Zeppelin
13	(14)	ONE MORE FROM THE ROAD	Lynyrd Skynyrd
14	(16)	CHICAGO X	Chicago
15	(—)	HEJIRA	Joni Mitchell
16	(13)	DREAMBOAT ANNIE	Heart
17	(17)	THEIR GREATEST HITS	Eagles
18	(15)	SILK DEGREES	Boz Scaggs
19	(—)	33⅓	George Harrison
20	(18)	CHILDREN OF THE WORLD	Bee Gees
21	(19)	FLEETWOOD MAC	
22	(—)	JAMES TAYLOR GREATEST HITS	
23	(24)	YEAR OF THE CAT	Al Stewart
24	(20)	SUMMERTIME DREAM	Gordon Lightfoot
25	(28)	SONG OF JOY	Captain & Tennille
26	(22)	HASTEN DOWN THE WIND	Linda Ronstadt
27	(21)	NO REASON TO CRY	Eric Clapton
28	(—)	LINDA RONSTADT GREATEST HITS	
29	(—)	IT LOOKS LIKE SNOW	Phoebe Snow
30	(27)	NIGHTS ARE FOREVER	England Dan & John Ford Coley

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

METAPHYSICAL



An interview with JACKSON BROWNE

Words: STEVE CLARKE
Photography: PENNIE SMITH

WHAT A way to start a show.

Rather than open his set with one of his less metaphysical numbers, Jackson Browne jumps right in at the deep-end and straight-away lays one of his heaviest and most unfathomable songs on the audience; "The Fuse", the opener from his new album, "The Pretender". And he follows it up with a couple of others that aren't exactly short on profundity, "Farther On" and "For Everyman", the latter the title track of Browne's second album, a record that rests comfortably alongside Dylan's "Blood On The Tracks", Neil Young's "On The Beach" and Joni Mitchell's "The Hissing Of Summer Lawns" as a '70s classic.

Browne stands there guitarless, arms dangling at his sides — vulnerable and fragile-looking. And yet the music coming from him and his five-piece band is tough, tough as a steel cord, and in perfect empathy with the song's lyrics. They tell of the life-force and how, come hell and high water (and in Browne's songs there's lots of that) nothing's going to quash it.

The song uses the striking image of time running through every dead and living thing like a fuse. And that's not all. Jackson Browne doesn't make a habit of putting across just one point in a song. In "The Fuse" itself, he touches on themes which are familiar subject matter for him and ones pertinent to us all; metaphysical themes like our need (and how difficult it is) to justify our existence . . . and the apocalypse.

The song's sense of drama is heightened by Browne's main-man, David Lindley, who plays lap-slide like you never heard it played before. The tension starts to break when Browne passionately and pleadingly puts the question, "Oh Lord, are there really people starving still?". From then on the song escalates to its affirmative climax . In his first number this 28-year-old from Los Angeles has touched many bases, and, in doing so, lit a flame in the audience's collective emotions.

The only time I've ever been moved to tears by a rock performer was at a Jeff Beck gig — during BBA's highly chartered workout of Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready" when Beck went places I didn't know existed. Tonight Jackson Browne is having a similar effect, but for different reasons. Tears don't materialise, but it's a very close thing, and I lost count of how many times I felt chills down my spine during his set.

Jackson Browne is quite simply the most important singer-songwriter to emerge in the '70s, and one who has original vision. His perceptions of the human condition are on a different level to those of any composer working in rock. True, there are similarities between him and Neil Young and Joni Mitchell in that all three have something in common with the romantic tradition, but whereas a Young or a Mitchell song will make observations on situations outside of themselves (although invariably they're at the centre of what's going on, Browne's songs are more inward looking. Consequently his themes are fundamental and universal. When he writes about birth, death, rebirth, love and sex, it's with the insight of a poet and the imagery of a romantic, all executed with the craft of a master lyricist.

In the past, he has exhibited a supreme sense of melody, although

Continues over page

From over page

on his last two albums his melodies have been less immediate, seemingly a consequence of him moving away from the classical romantic that was Jackson Browne on his debut album to a more metaphysical approach, as demonstrated on "Late For The Sky" and "The Pretender". As a singer he possesses neither much power nor a wide range, but he sings with unwavering commitment in a voice which is both perfectly colourless and finely resonant. His dirge-like vocals are the ideal vehicle for those '70s anthems of his, like "For Everyman" and "Before The Deluge" where he sings of post-Woodstock disillusionment with a refreshing positivism — *"Let the music keep our spirits high / Let creation reveal its secrets by and by / When the light that shines within us reaches the sky."*

Neither Browne's lyrical themes nor musical devices are as varied or as readily accessible as Young's or Mitchell's, but the reception he receives at Manchester, the opening night of his first headlining British tour, is ecstatic. "The Pretender" is in the American top ten . . . and climbing. Over here it looks likely to make a considerable dent on the album chart, all of which is very encouraging, seeing that his music lacks the commerciality of The Eagles and Linda Ronstadt ("The three of us stick together on most things", said Ms Ronstadt) and is saying a hell of a lot to boot.

OKAY, LET'S cut the gush, 'cause Jackson Browne is not the easiest person in the world to interview. Certainly he's likeable, but when it comes to answering the most interesting questions — stuff about his past and his songs — he's highly evasive. I talked to him the previous afternoon in his London hotel. Mostly he's laconic and talks in a near whisper, so as not to disturb his three year-old son Ethan, who's asleep in an ajoining room.

Jackson looks just like his photographs — young and wise. He grins a lot and isn't anything like the brooding, intensely serious young man that a casual listener would surmise him to be from hearing his albums. The only time he gets intense is when he goes into a lengthy rap about how imminent and inevitable a nuclear accident is and even then I get the impression that his spiel is somewhat perfunctory, as if he's said the same thing to countless interviewers before, although I don't doubt his sincerity.

Right away he tells me he's just played The Eagles' new album "California Hotel" which has put him in a "real thoughtful mood". As most of you probably know, The Eagles, particularly Mssrs Frey and Henley, are tighter than a cork in a wine bottle with Jackson. He co-wrote their greatest number, "Take It Easy", shyly appeared with them at Wembley back in the summer of '75 and had a hand in writing their tribute to James Dean. Jackson admits that in his formative years he modelled himself on Dean, the founder of punk in its true sense. But as Browne says, "Didn't everybody? I mean I got busted for having a switch blade when I was 13. I pulled a knife on a kid." He doesn't attempt to look mean.

He also mentions in passing that he used to imitate Dylan a lot, something which you'd never guess listening to his albums.

JACKSON Browne was born in Heidelberg, Germany, of American parents. His father was in the army and worked on the service newspaper, *Stars And Stripes*. The Brownes (he has one sister and one brother) returned to Los Angeles when Jackson was three, his father teaching for a living. Somewhere along the line his parents split up and his father went to live in Japan; "Daddy's Tune" on "The Pretender" mentions the guilt he feels because of the way he treated his father.

As a young teenager he was into bluesmen like Dave Van Ronk, Jack Elliot, Lightnin' Hopkins, Jimmy Reed and Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee — and "folkies" like Dylan and Joan Baez. Summers he did a lot of surfing and it was on the beach that he first picked up a guitar. One of the first songs he wrote was "These Days", a brooding, introspective piece of melancholia, with a fine construction and a genuinely haunting melody. He wrote it when he was 16. Tom Rush recorded the song in '68 and Nico recorded it, along with a couple of other Jackson Browne songs, on her "Chelsea Girls" album.

Browne's journey to the East Coast where he was to meet Nico, then part of the Velvet Underground, has been heavily mythologised in the past, as has his affair with Nico whom he accompanied on acoustic guitar. Says Browne, "I had a pretty serious crush on Nico, but I tell ya I don't feel very comfortable talking about that. I was only there six weeks. I don't live there. I wasn't part of that scene. Those people were very nice to me. They were friendly."

While in New York, Browne played at Andy Warhol's Mod Dom — the first time he ever got paid for a gig.

"I couldn't really say exactly when I left home 'cause I'd be gone for a couple of weeks and then I'd come back," he recalls. Returning to LA he played with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. The liason was short-lived and Browne didn't get to record with the group. He played the clubs, sometimes as half of an acoustic duo with Ned Doheney (who he met up with in Longbranch Pennywhistle, the group which included future Eagle Glenn Frey), took part in an abortive Electra sampler album, had voice training ("They weren't singing lessons. It was maybe the same as taking your horn or your guitar to a master craftsman and having it improved"), and did a lot of acid.

When he cut his first album in '71, Browne was already respected among the cognescenti as a song-writer. The album received unanimous critical approval and had none of the deficiencies endemic to first albums. From the beginning Jackson Browne was a fully-formed artist in his own right. If there were influences they were impossible to detect.

BROWNE IS adamant that he is a songwriter and not a poet. He says, "That people focus mostly on the words is all right with me. My songs have music. They're meant to be sung. I was just reading this book by Robert Lowell. Zevon" (Warren Zevon, the tour's support act whose debut album Jackson produced) "gave it to me. *I'm* not a poet. *That's* a poet."

In a recent magazine article, Browne categorically stated that Dylan Thomas was his favourite poet. This he now denies. "I've only ever read about two of his poems. The fact is I can't read more than about two or three pages of Dylan Thomas without shutting the book and writing something of my own. He's very inspiring. Pablo Narudo" (the Chilean poet whose poem "Brown And Agile Child" is superimposed over a photograph of Ethan on the back cover of "The Pretender") "is my favourite poet. He's one of the only poets I've ever read. 'Brown And Agile Child' isn't very indicative of his work."

When it comes to talking about the meaning of his songs or even the inspiration behind them, Browne stays schtum, explaining, "If a song could be paraphrased in so many words it wouldn't be much of a song. I think you lose a lot by that. I could go on for about an hour and a half about 'The Pretender' but I don't feel comfortable saying those things, especially in print. I think I might find it easier talking to friends of mine about my songs, but of course they don't have much appetite for me talking about my songs." He grins broadly.

Your songs aren't as immediately accessible as Young's or Mitchell's? "You really think so? I'm amazed to hear you say it. I have a compulsion to make sense." He tells me that all his songs are autobiographical, but doesn't enlarge on the point.

Why does he think anyone should be interested in his life?

"That's a real good question," he replies. "I ask myself that question myself. Why should anyone be more interested in somebody else's life more than their own? Which of course is not to say they are. In fact they're not so much interested in another person's life, but more how they imagine that other person's life to be."

What Browne *does* tell me about his song-writing is that he doesn't find it easy to write lyrics and often he'll spend months working on them. "I sometimes find myself halfway through a song saying something that I wasn't sure what I meant. To say this next line I've got to be sure what I mean. It's sort of cathartic in a way. Before a song's gonna be finished you have to come to grips with what you're talking about. And often you don't know when you start a song.

"I'm very influenced by the songwriters I know. I find myself writing a song that sounds a lot like a Jack Temchin" (the writer of "Peaceful Easy Feeling" on The Eagles' debut album who should have his own album out before too long) "song. I think there's a certain attitude in 'The Pretender' that's influenced by Warren."

What do you want people to get from your songs? He pauses before answering, "I don't even think about it." Undaunted I try another one. Your newer songs have lacked the humour of some of the older ones? "Well, it's not because I've lost my sense of humour but I know what you mean. The last two albums were written as albums and written around the time they were recorded," he says, not giving too much away. In passing he mentions that "Colours Of The Sun" (as well as "These Days") from "For Everyman" is a song that predates the rest of the album, as does "Take It Easy", which was written while he was recording his first album and when The Eagles were making their first record too. Browne started the song in England (he's played here twice before; in 1972 with Joni Mitchell and before that a one-off date at the Albert Hall with Laura Nyro), but wasn't able to finish it so Frey helped him out, "It's really a collaboration," he says.

The alloted time for the interview is almost over. I ask him about the "apocalypse", something he has written about in several songs. Such a question is bound to pay up trumps, since the subject is sufficently non-personal to draw him out of himself. It does, and Browne goes into this long rap: "I don't have an obsession with the apocalypse. I'm not sure what it is. It's a biblical term. I hadn't even heard of the word until reviewers started using it talking about my records."

He pauses, and moving forward in his seat, says, "Do you really think things can keep rolling along like this? Shit! Even if you're just a gambler the law of averages says it's gotta pop. People just don't understand. It would take a dixie cup of plutonium to wipe out the population of the planet. Just forget about disease and pestilence and over population. And forget about earthquakes. Forget about anybody pushing the button.

"Let's just talk about a nuclear catastrophe, not a nuclear war, not the holocaust, but just like leaks — leaky nuclear reactors. It would be deadly for 200,000 years and we've only been speaking English for a couple, maybe three thousand years. People are just gonna destroy this planet. I hate to sound so simple minded. It sounds awful hippy to say that, but it's so true. I imagine that life will go on but maybe not my son's life. I'm just writing about what I see and what I feel. I think it's pretty obvious to most people that it can't go on."

BACK AT the hotel after the Manchester gig Jackson is more talkative, a mood doubtless created by the euphoria of his successful gig and a considerable amount of drink. He's also very angry too — because of a piece written about him in New York's grisly avant-garde weekly, *The Village Voice*.

He sounds off: "Everybody wants you to insist that you make these timeless, monumental and universal statements about existence in the '70s and speak reverently of the '60s and nostalgically of the '50s. That's crap. They (the critics) hold it against you if you don't say the same thing you said last time.

"To be in the business of listening to every album that comes out and evaluating its merit, how the fuck much good can you be after about three albums in one week? I mean, I listen to two albums in one month. I think it's like performers who work too hard. Pretty soon they don't believe it and they're out there hacking away. Obviously a journalist has got a deadline to fill and he has to review whatever albums the editor says he has to review.

"We get to write about whatever we want to write about. And nobody's under any pressure to write about anything other than what we want to write about or make any more albums than we're able to make. I really believe the best thing about rock 'n' roll writing is to illuminate and not to evaluate.

"Joan (Joni Mitchell) doesn't like to do interviews because she's either made a fool of by the interviewer or she makes a fool of herself. And that's a pretty open-and-shut, honest thing to say. I wish I could say it that simply myself. The fact is if some dude isn't out to kill you then you probably open your mouth too much and just wind up saying things which aren't . . . when I'm quoted in normal conversation I can't quite forgive myself for being quite so unremarkable. None of this stuff would go very well on a record, would it? 'Cause there's no music and it's not distilled down into carefully . . ." And with remarkable candour he says, "I'm not happy with much that I write about myself but that's because I didn't get to write it. It doesn't hurt for me to admit that. I'd like to describe myself all the time. I'd like to get all the jobs writing about myself.

"By the way, do you think I sneer the words *'I want to know what became of the changes we waited for love to bring?'* (a line from "The Pretender" and the description given it in the *Village Voice* piece). 'Cause that was a shock when he said that . . . because if he thought that I would really have made quite a mistake."

THERE WAS almost two years in between the release of Jackson's penultimate album "Late For

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The Sky" and "The Pretender". After producing Warren Zevon's album (where instead of going for a similar sound to that of his own records, Browne went in for a much more rugged approach, ideally suited to Zevon's wry insights into the seamy side of LA) in the months between October '75 and February '76, during which time he took a few weeks off to marry Phyliss Major, the model with whom he'd been living with for three years, Jackson started work on "The Pretender" on the first of March; he'd finished work on Zevon's album the previous day.

On the morning of March 25 his wife committed suicide by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. Work on "The Pretender" was suspended until May 6. From then until the end of July, Jackson worked on the album five days a week. Through August and September he worked on the record during every waking hour, except for when he took his son on a camping holiday. "The Pretender" was completed on September 27.

In terms of its actual sound, "The Pretender" marks a departure for Browne. Produced by Jon Landau, former rock critic and co-producer of Bruce Springsteen's "Born To Run", the sound is more authoratative than before, with the drums far more prominent. The previous two albums, "For Everyman" and "Late For The Sky", had relied heavily on David Lindley's contribution on fiddle and guitars. On "The Pretender" he is featured less extensively. The album also features such innovations (for Browne) as horns on one track and one song, "Linda Paloma" played entirely by a bunch of Mexican musicians.

Says Browne, "I have a big banner I hang out in front of my studio door when all of my friends come and play. It says 'Abandon All Standards Ye Who Enter Here' because there's these guys who make their records in a certain way. If you listen to their records and you listen to mine theirs are clean and precise which is not to say they're devoid of character. It's just to say mine are devoid of cleanliness and precision.

"Jon Landau is the only person I've talked to in years and years that I felt I could work with in the studio. Now I see that I probably could work with just about anybody. He's one of the only persons who can tolerate my self-criticism. Other people shut me up and regard it as lack of self confidence and try to prop me back up when I'm really not in need of it. He was totally responsible for the sound of that album.

"I was a long time in the studio but I was a long time before I ever felt like going in. You could say that I didn't want to write the songs that were there. I didn't want to say the things that I went ahead and said after all. It wasn't that I really want to deal with the subjects which were happening in my life.

"I don't feel comfortable writing about anything than what is really real in my life and so if I can't write it's probably because I don't want to come to grips with it. Writing is a process of coming to grips with whatever is really happening inside of you and if it takes a long time maybe it was something that was hard to bring out of yourself.

"I always feel like making you guys feel more at ease and going ahead and explaining it. But it's really a mistake to do that." He hesitates. "It's about deciding that perhaps it would have been better to . . . I can't do it, man. I'm sorry. I can't do it. It's really about what it's about. I'm afraid that if I try to say in so many words I will be short changing myself and not quite saying it as well as I said it in the song but also ruining it for somebody else who thinks it's something else. Let them get whatever they get. That's what a song is. It's a somewhat vague and mysterious and somewhat all purpose kind of vehicle.

"It's about embracing a humdrum existence. It's about pretending that life is simple and easy. You've done it. You've made me say it. It's about a person who would rather just have a job, just go to work and come back from work and go back to work again in the morning then come back. There's so many people in the world who live like that and they've got to be thinking there's something else. Here's somebody who doesn't live like that at all who imagine that's maybe the answer.

"See, you got me explaining this tune. Did you ever hear this Joni Mitchell song about three waitresses with black diamond ear-rings?" Brangrill. "Yeah. There she is imagining that the gas station attendant is enlightened 'cause he's happy. Maybe he was only happy with the moment that he saw her and maybe he really got a world of grief. 'The Pretender' is just about being totally lost. He's a character in a story and the story could loosely fit some events in my life. The poor fucker's so confused that he thinks that maybe if he were to get a job the world would fall into place, there would be an order to things and he might be actually happy watching the *Tonight* show.

"I think to say specifically what it's about is going to rob some people whose perceptions don't correspond exactly to mind. That's what the business of a song is. That's why I don't write prose. I write songs and they're music. And feeling is created. If you just reprinted the text hopefully, it would read all right. But it's not a manual. It's not written in exact language. It's written in language that should evoke some feeling. And should stir something in somebody. Feelings they don't understand perhaps. The very best of the music that has affected me are things that I don't quite understand, why I feel like crying. Mystery is the realy value.

"I want people to hear 'The Pretender' and I want them to know how I feel. It's as basic as that."

CHANGE OF PERFORMANCE TIMES

ROD STEWART

THE CONCERT

OLYMPIA DEC. 21, 22, 23, 24 JAN. 14, 15

The Concerts will start at

7.30 p.m.

not 8.00 as previously advertised

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The NME/Virgin Record Stores RocksOffer

THROUGHOUT December, the Rocksoffer lists will remain the same each week, to allow everyone to take full advantage of the offer before Christmas. The first group of 30 contains albums which we feel might make suitable presents (for a variety of reasons), while for the special Rocksoffer list, available to NME readers with the discount voucher in the bottom right-hand corner, we have put together some of the outstanding albums of 1976.

The authorised NME "Best of '76" will, of course, be with you in a matter of weeks . . .

We should point out that five albums on the top list are not yet available: A Day At The Races, Hotel California, Wings Over America, the new Genesis album and Linda Ronstadt's greatest hits; however there is a strong possibility that all will be in the shops before Christmas, and so they will be immediately available from Virgin Record Shops at the discount price.

70p Off

Top 30 NME New Releases

ABBA
Greatest Hits
Arrival
BEACH BOYS
20 Golden Greats
THE BEATLES
Magical Mystery Tour
GLEN CAMPBELL
20 Golden Greats
PETER COOK & DUDLEY MOORE
Derek & Clive Live
ROY DOTRICE
Watership Down (Narration Of)
DR. FEELGOOD
Stupidity

THE EAGLES
Greatest Hits
Hotel California
FLEETWOOD MAC
Fleetwood Mac
FOUR SEASONS
The Greatest Hits
PETER FRAMPTON
Frampton Comes Alive
GENESIS
New Album
GEORGE HARRISON
Thirty-three & ⅓
STEVE HILLAGE
L

ELTON JOHN
Blue Moves
LED ZEPPELIN
The Song Remains The Same
DEAN MARTIN
20 Original Hits
STEVE MILLER
Fly Like An Eagle
JONI MITCHELL
Hejira
MIKE OLDFIELD
Boxed
QUEEN
A Day At The Races

LINDA RONSTADT
Greatest Hits
ROD STEWART
A Night On The Town
TANGERINE DREAM
Stratsosfear
THE WHO
The Story Of . . .
NICOL WILLIAMSON
The Hobbit (Narration Of)
WINGS
Wings Over America
STEVIE WONDER
Songs In The Key Of Life

This week's Special RocksOffer, only available to NME readers.

NEIL ARDLEY
Kaleidoscope Of Rainbows
JOAN ARMATRADING
Joan Armatrading
DAVID BOWIE
Station To Station
JACKSON BROWNE
The Pretender
BURNING SPEAR
Man In The Hills

J.J.CALE
Troubadour
GUY CLARK
Old Number One
BOB DYLAN
Desire
FLAMIN' GROOVIES
Shake Some Action
GENESIS
A Trick Of The Tail

EMMYLOU HARRIS
Elite Hotel
KURSAAL FLYERS
The Golden Mile
NILS LOFGREN
Cry Tough
BOB MARLEY
Rastaman Vibration
KATE AND ANNA McGARRIGLE
Kate And Anna McGarrigle

GRAHAM PARKER
Heat Treatment
RACING CARS
Uptown Saturday Night
BOB SEGER
Live Bullet
STEELEYE SPAN
Rocket Cottage
THIN LIZZY
Jailbreak

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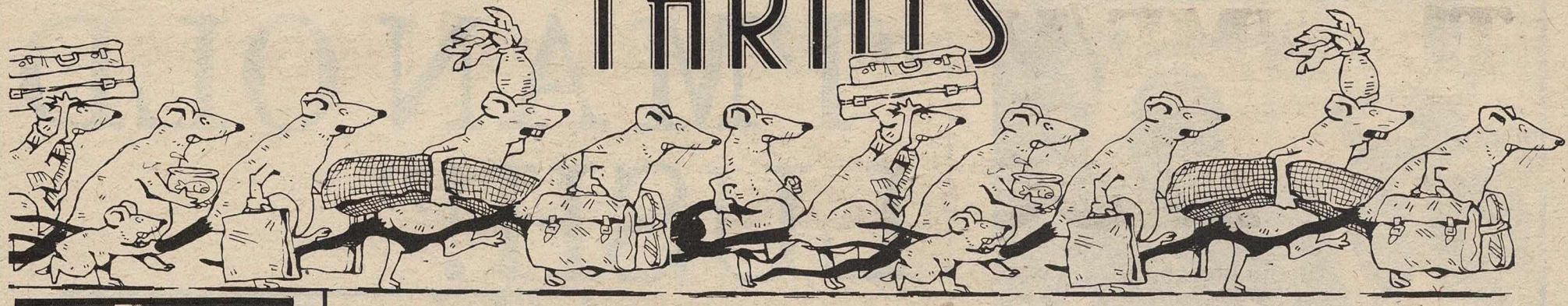
Leeds: 20, Queen Victoria St. Liverpool: 169, Market Way, St. Johns Centre.
Manchester: 9, Lever St. Newcastle: 10&12, High Friars, Eldon Sq.
Glasgow: 308-11, Argyle St. Hull: 5&6, Mill St., Prospect Centre.
Birmingham: 74, Bull St. Bradford: 37, Arndale Mall, Kirkgate.
Coventry: 11, City Arcade. Edinburgh: 18a, Frederick St.
Southampton: 16, Bargate St. Swansea: 34, Union St.
Brighton: 126, North St. Bristol: 2a, The Haymarket.

Virgin NME RocksOffer

THRILLS



PISTOLS

Episode 93

THE FACT that ninety-nine per cent of their critics have never even seen a live Sex Pistols gig doesn't really matter anymore.

What does matter is that the storm of self-righteous indignation that swept the nation after the episode with Bill Grundy has resulted in Town Hall, local council, University and Rank Leisure officials exercising their virtual monopoly of potential rock venues in this country, and, by doing so, taking away the right of certain young rock bands to play for the people who want to see them. Don't bother with the old Any Publicity Is Good Publicity line; never before has there been a situation where rock bands have been so severely restricted in the right to play their music.

For the current state of play, see News Desk — page 2.

At the time of going to press, only a handful of gigs had actually been played. This has resulted in huge financial loss all round, especially for the American combo on the tour, The Heartbreakers. It's a long way from CBGB's to the UK when you don't have a recording contract; then when you get here you find you ain't got many gigs either . . . "Yeah, we got a few days off," Johnny Thunders said last Friday.

The manager of Clash, Bernard Rhodes, wasn't taking it so calmly. "Kids should have the chance to see the entertainment they want," he told me. "The Government tells them to work hard for their money and get the nation back on its feet and then they won't give 'em the chance to see the entertainment they want."

The Clash have no recording contract and Bernard says the money financing them is coming straight out of his pocket.

The Pistols/EMI relationship seems more strained than ever, with board-meetings about the rumpus at top level. The group's much touted advance has been used to finance the tour, and if you're under the impression that since the Pistols signed on the dotted line they've pockets full of spending cash then you're way off target.

The Damned are off the tour following the incident in Derby where they said maybe they would play, and the Buzzcocks have replaced them. Stiff Records stand to lose a lot of money because of the band leaving the tour, and the lack of venues for them to play subsequent to the present "punk" backlash. And if Stiff Records gets in serious trouble because of the Mary Whitehouse mentality of officialdom then it would be nothing short of a real obscenity. I spoke to Rick Rodgers of Stiff Records and Damned management: "I don't want to get into any bitching," he said, "It's just a shame."

Fleet Street have revealed by the way they handled the Pistols' tour publicity that their integrity when it comes to rock music is mostly gutter level. At the Leeds gig, one reporter from one very well-known London paper had actually received orders from his editor to write a "front page hatchet job."

Luxembourg DJ, your royal ruler, Tony Prince was suspended for one night from the airwaves for inviting the Pistols on his show.

The witch-hunt goes on and on and on . . .

If this is democracy, what else can you show me?

□ TONY PARSONS

DESTABILIZATION

That's the name of the game

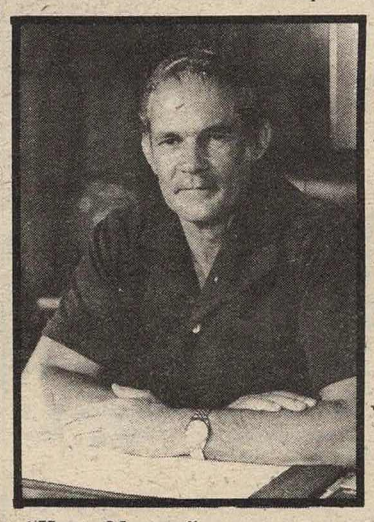
AN NME INVESTIGATION INTO JAMAICA AND THE C.I.A. CONNECTION BY MILES & NEIL SPENCER

WHO SHOT Bob Marley and why did they do it? What was the motive of the five gunmen who sprayed Marley's Kingston home with automatic fire on Friday December 3 (See last week's news story for details).

It's thought the shooting was politically motivated, an attempt to prevent The Wailers playing at the Free Concert at the Caymanas racetrack two days later, a concert originally scheduled to take place on the front lawn of Prime Minister Michael Manley's presidential palace, although Marley said that he had no political motive, and was playing for "love of the people". The profits from his next single will go to the people of Trenchtown.

The Jamaican elections take place on December 15 — you should know the results by the time you read this. The election campaign, where Manley's People's National Party (PNP) and Edward Seaga's Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) have literally battled it out, has all along been characterised by outbursts of violence and political assassination. Most of it has been aimed at supporters of Manley's PNP, and the widespread

Downtown Kingston — "Babylon mess wit' economy"



"Heavy Manners"

claim is that the JLP are receiving support from the CIA.

CIA activity is apparently rife on the island at the moment. Oh, you can't *prove* anything in strict terms, but everyone knows and admits that it's there, and many of the incidents have a flavour familiar from other confirmed CIA activities in the past. Like, for example in Chile, where you may recall President Allende's democratically elected left wing government was overthrown in a violent coup, engineered and financed, as has now been revealed to a US Government Investigation into the CIA's activities, by the agency itself.

Another source is former CIA man Mark Philip Agee, who allowed the *New Musical Express* to look at some of his files. The NME also saw press releases from *COUNTERSPY*, an organisation set up in the States by Agee and similarly, social-minded security operatives.

Preceding a violent coup such as the one in Chile, or the abortive attempt to invade Cuba in the notorious Bay Of Pigs invasion in 1960, the CIA employ what they refer to as "destabilisation" tactics — shaking up a nation's feelings of security and undermining national morale. The shooting of a well-known and much admired music star, one who sings anthems against oppression, and who puts lyrics like *"Rasta don't work for no CIA"* in his songs, would seem to fit right in with the generally understood meaning of "Destabilisation".

The Wailers' concert did in fact take place, to an ecstatic crowd of 80,000. Marley appeared and played for an hour and a half and Michael Manley watched from on top of a VW bus. Marley has since received more threats to his life and is under constant police surveillance.

IN THE 1972 election campaign, Marley and The Wailers, together with a large majority of Jamaica's musicians, supported Manley, enabling him to win at the polls. His campaign song, "Better Must Come", hit the top of the charts round about the same time he won the election. This year, his song seems to be "Under Heavy Manners", by Derrick Morgan . . .

This is a State of Emergency in a Jamdown
Gunman, you better change your plan
. . .

The phrase "Under Heavy Manners" comes from Manley's speech when he introduced the State of Emergency earlier this year, a package of draconian security measures designed to curb the rash of murders and violence in the country. There had been an estimated 300 politically motivated murders before the bill was introduced. The murder rate dropped after the Bill was introduced, but started to rise again as the election campaign hotted up.

In fact, Jamaica seems to be facing a classic CIA destabilisation operation designed to make it impossible for the present government to rule, and to precipitate a right-wing take over which would be better suited to U.S. financial and political interests in the Caribbean.

Jamaica has recently been facing a hostile press in the USA, where they feel that Manley is a Communist because of his efforts to establish

Marley: Only one of 300 shootings.

friendly relations with his next door neighbour, Cuba, which is only 90 miles to the north.

Manley also supported the use of Cuban troops in Angola, but argues that moral support and friendship don't make him a Communist. Jamaica is a Black third world nation; it's only natural that they would support efforts toward Black independence in Africa. The Jamaicans only recently achieved independence themselves.

Manley's policies have been to forge closer links with Cuba and the Third World in general. In doing this he has lost a lot of the large middle class vote which ensured his sweeping victory in 1972, but he has gained the support of the young poor Blacks, particularly in the Kingston area, most of whom are voting for the first time and 80,000 of whom have benefited from the government's welfare and work provision programmes.

Economic chaos is an important part of destabilisation. The Americans have persuaded international capital to pull out — for the time being — with the age-old threat of Communism being just round the corner. This, combined with exaggerated and sometimes false news-stories in the U.S. press has also cut back enormously on Jamaica's all-important tourist industry.

False news-stories — the CIA calls them "disinformation" — have appeared in both the Jamaican and the foreign press, all designed to discredit Manley and make him look a Commie. Money has been leaving the country at an alarming rate. Horace Clarke, the mining minister, says that over $200,000,000 have been taken out of the country *illegally* in the past two years.

Civil unrest has also been provoked using strikes and demonstrations — followed by paramilitary violence — evoking memories of Chile. In Chile, a demonstration by housewives banging pots and pans and demanding the overthrow of Allende was given world press coverage. The recent U.S. Senate investigation into the CIA has now revealed that the march was organised , and the women paid, by the CIA.

In Jamaica, a middle class womens' organisation called The National Council For Women sprang into being and tried to organise a one-day strike accompanied by a march of women carrying — guess what — empty pots and pans. They didn't succeed and the organisation was never heard of again.

A wave of strikes in the transport, telephone and electrical industries began, and there were signs that this was organised by ex-graduates of the American Institute For Free Labor Development, believed to be a CIA "front" organisation.

Then it was time for Henry Kissinger to come over for a chat. He

Continues over page

From page 9

brought with him the new Jamaican CIA station chief, Norman Descoteaux. Manley refused to denounce Cuban aid to Angola and things hotted up.

A plan, evidently codenamed "Operation Werewolf" was discovered when a former government minister from the JLP was arrested and his papers seized. The plan was designed to overthrow Manley's administration by force, Chilean style. Arms dumps were discovered and several JLP officials jailed.

In the Orange Lane tenement section of Trenchtown, right-wing paramilitary forces sealed off the block with barricades and then molotov-cocktailed it, killing ten people, eight of them children, and rendering 500 poor people homeless.

A rightwing gang sealed the exits of a dance hall and then opened fire on the kids. The youth club was affiliated to the PNP and the gang did not steal anything. The attack can only be explained as politically motivated.

Then there was the shipment of flour from Germany inexplicably contaminated with the poison, Parathion. It killed 11 people before it was traced. You can't prove it was the CIA, but they did use the same trick and the same poison when they overthrew Jagan's government in Guyana in 1966.

You might wonder what all this has to do with you? We're drawing a parallel between the assassination attempt on Bob Marley, and the chopping off of Victor Jara's fingers in the Santiago Sports Stadium in Chile before he was murdered.

That particular "destabilisation" left 20,000 workers' corpses behind it as well as 100,000 political prisoners, most of whom are still in custody.

Ex-CIA agent Philip Agee went to Jamaica, paid for by the Jamaican Council For Civil Liberties. He came up with a list of seven CIA officers and other embassy staff who he claimed were working to destabilise the country. The JCCL printed their names, addresses, phone numbers and car licence numbers on 100,000 leaflets and distributed them throughout the island.

When Agee returned to Britain, Prime Minister James Callaghan ordered his deportation along with reporter Mark Hosenball, who has worked with Agee in the past. This is ironic since Manley and Callaghan are both members of the Second International, and one would have thought that the British Labour Party would have praised Agee's efforts in assisting their fraternal party, Manley's JNP.

The fact is that there is a new CIA station chief here in Britain and Callaghan is also an old buddy of Kissinger. Considering the way the International Monetery Fund refused cash to Allende and yet poured funds into Chile after the coup, it might be wondered whether the removal of Agee and Hosenball is one of the secret pre-conditions to Britain's own IMF loan.

"La-La-La-Lies"

NO, NO, SURELY NOT?

THE LAST FIVE American Presidents have lied through their teeth to the American people, says Dr. Henry A. Alker, associate professor of psychology at Cornell University. "Nixon was the most deceiving, followed by Kennedy, Ford, Johnson and Eisenhower", declared Dr. Alker. "Each deliberately attempted to mislead the public in varying degrees."

Dr. Alker reached this blasphemous conclusion after analysis of every press conference by the five presidents.

"Presidents know how to lie and lie well — so well that when telling a premeditated lie they give an impression of extreme honesty. In fact, they create more of an impression of honesty when they lie than when they tell the truth".

Dr. Alker says this is especially true in the case of Nixon who "neglected the truth often, letting it take a back seat in his attempt to influence the American people. Nixon told the nation he was not involved in Watergate — and many people believed him until the tapes of his conversations were released."

And now a quick run down on Lies Your Leaders Told You:

Gerald R. Ford used "deceptive language" in August 1974, when he implied that a pardon for Nixon would be inappropriate. Yet he pardoned Nixon the next month.

Lyndon B. Johnson committed the "devious act" of claiming the North Vietnamese had made an unprovoked attack on U.S. destroyers in the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, instead of admitting that the incident was provoked.

John F. Kennedy said at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 that the assault was not supported by the U.S. In fact, Washington supplied weapons, funds and tactical advice.

Dwight D. Eisenhower "misled and deceived" in a 1957 press conference on disarmament. Ah, but could they lie while they smiled?

□ JULIE BURCHILL

"I'M AN OLD LUSH!"

JULIE BURCHILL PROBES LOUDON WAINWRIGHT ON CANCER AND BEATING UP PEOPLE IN WHEELCHAIRS

WAINRIGHT: "You make me feel so old"

AVEC MY heavy mauve cheek gloss and tacky silver shopping bag, I feel like a queer in a brothel at Birmingham Town Hall, but I'm tough. I curl my lip and sneer snidely at the Brummie hippies in their duffel coats and tangle-damp pre-Raphaelite locks. Lousy *Loudon Wainwright fans!*

I only heard of Loudon Wainwright a few weeks ago. I think he's cute and funny, but I was hardly bubbling with enthusiasm about dragging up to see him; the farthest north I've ever been is Watford Junction. Anyhow, everyone in this place is crazy about him.

Crash course for everyone who's as ignorant as me: Loudon Wainwright III is a very articulate boy who gets good reviews in the *nice* papers like *The Guardian* and *The Observer* and has been compared with R. D. Laing. He plays an acoustic guitar, exudes down home charm and is very tenderly vicious. He's made five alubms, none of which have been commercially successful. Nevertheless, he has a fanatical following in both Britain and America. His fans would kill for him.

He's also said to drink a lot.

The auditorium is pretty full. There's lots of cute girls around; more girls than boys. All wearing duffel coats and long hair. The long hair looks even more incongruous than the duffel coats.

Everyone suddenly roars and I open my eyes to find Loudon's onstage, much cuter than his photographs. Boy, they love him. He sings song from all his past elpees; "Down Drinking At The Bar", "The Man Who Couldn't Cry", "Kick In The Head", "Old Friend", "The Hardy Boys At The Y", "Motel Blues", "Red Guitar", "Dead Skunk", and from his latest Arista album "T Shirt", "Wine With Dinner" and "Talking Big Apple '75".

"Sure, I know New York is dirty and ugly and fulla cockroaches and gonorrhea and rats and junkies, hookers, rude cab drivers, bad air and bad vibes and unemployment and they don't pick up the garbage, ah but it's not boring."

He sings a lot of songs, but they're all so short. I keep waiting to be bored, but I'm shocked to find it doesn't happen. When Loudon leaves the stage after two encores, me and the hippies are still calling for more.

We sit in *The Four Seasons* waiting for Loudon. The menu is in French so I order a Coke and steal a match book. Loudon comes in and we eat pink candies and drink red wine. At one a.m. we're in the car back to London, Loudon singing "I Belong Tae Glasgie" in the back seat.

"Did you see Sandy Denny tonight? Did you *see* her? She was wrecked. She looked like a ghost. She just came backstage to shake hands; she wouldn't stay in the hall. She went out and sat in the sound van." Loudon shakes his head. "Another casualty."

Did you vote, Loudon?

"I only ever voted once, that was for McGovern in '72. McGovern was a schmuck but I knew Nixon was dangerous. Ford was dangerous, but no one knew. Carter's dangerous. Anyone who smiles that much you don't trust. They're all dangerous. They're all the same. Mohammad Ali should be President."

Nihilism au Go Go! Gee, Loud, you'd make a great punk.

"Aw, they're dumb. I wanna live forever."

Then why do you drink so much?

"You think I drink too much?"

You're an old lush.

"Yeah . . . I guess I am." He scratches thoughtfully. "I just love the atmosphere, the ambience of bars."

"Sometimes when I drink too much the next day I can't think
Sometimes when I drink too much the next day I can't drink
Sometimes when I drink too much I feel like throwing up
Sometimes when I drink too much I cannot get it up". ("Wine With Dinner")

I fall asleep and when I awake Loudon is dissecting in minute detail the merits of malt whisky.

Why didn't you sing "Nice Jewish Girls" tonight?

"I didn't want to be anti-Semitic in Birmingham."

"Nice Jewish Girls" is anti-Semitic?

"Just the opposite. I was brought up real clean cut Episcopalian; then when I was a teenager I started sneaking out to see Jewish chicks — they've always seemed to me to be the essence of womanhood."

You thought Wainwright was just another folkie klutz? No way! In '69 he was real tight with Andy Warhol starlet Penny Arcade, who in turn was real tight with Patti Smith, who just happened to have something cooking for Todd Rundgren. The four of them used to go down Max's every night and get generally dissapated. Can Kristofferson and Lightfoot say the same?

We stop outside of the Portobello Hotel and Loudon falls out of the car and loons around on the shivering sidewalk. He writes the names of dead idols on frosted car windows; Jim, Janis, Jimi.

"You make me feel so old," he says sadly. We stumble down to the basement bar. "I'm home!" calls Loudon to no one in particular.

We drink champagne with an East End gambler and the expatriate American producer of "The Muppets". Loudon does Lynyrd Skynyrd imitations, which consist of banging on the bar, yelling and being generally obnoxious. I fall asleep again and when I wake up someone is passing round a colour Polaroid of some young German ladies, who only an hour ago were disrobing on these very barstools.

"Where are they?" demands Loudon with a gleam in his eye.

Do you like England?

"It's green, like Massachusetts."

Did you sign a lot of autographs?

"Yeah, all five of them."

Do you have a bigger following in America?

"Proportionately, I have a bigger following in England. One of my albums has actually managed to pay for itself. None of the others came anywhere near doing that. But they keep on letting me make them. I don't know why."

Are you happy?

"No one of any worth is happy."

Why do you make jokes about everything, then? I mean, the things you sing about . . . cancer, gonorrhea, beating up people in wheelchairs . . . you're worse than Lou Reed. Is there anything you wouldn't make a joke about? Concentration camps?

"Oh no. That would be in bad taste."

Is there such a thing as bad taste anymore?

Loudon shook his head, ordered a bourbon and gazed across Stanley Gardens. "Life is just a bowl of pips".

How the Laid-Back Californian met the Drunken Scot and the Heavy Black Irishman . . .

Photographic evidence provided by JOE STEVENS, ERICA ESCHENBERG and DAVID HILL

AND THIN LIZZY LIVED HAPPILY BUT UNLUCKILY EVER AFTER. ETHNIC JOKES FROM — APPROPRIATELY ENOUGH — CHRIS SALEWICZ

IF LEW GRADE ever gets round to planning a rock 'n' roll soap opera he could fill the first fifty-two weeks (at least) with The Tempestuous Tragedies Of Thin Lizzy.

Sex. Drugs. Violence. Yes, all of humanity's woes unfurl on the rich Tapestry Of Life woven by the magical spell of these four young musicians. And what richness of character:

The Black Irishman, the Silent white Irishman, The Archetypal Laid-back Californian . . . and the Drunken Scotsman.

And with that strange quirkiness that is Fate's Eternal Paradox, just as they get over one hurdle Thin Lizzy manage to slip and break a leg on the next.

Look back to this summer, for example. Lizzy were saved at the last moment from breaking up through lack of funds by "The Boys Are Back In Town" and "Jailbreak" heading the creditors off at the financial pass.

In the States, consolidation and clean-up by the group is about to start. *Whoops!* Phil goes yellow, and hepatitis causes the last three weeks of their US tour to be cancelled.

Those last three weeks are re-scheduled for December. The night prior to Taking A Poundstretcher To Pennsylvania, twenty-year-old guitarist and Scotsman Brian Robertson goes down London's once fashionable Speakeasy club for a wee dram with young Frankie Miller, also Scotsman. A slight altercation occurs. Brian, and particularly his guitar playing hand, get stomped by some unfriendly natives.

Result: the re-scheduled three weeks are cancelled out yet again.

There are those, of course, who are not surprised by Brian's behaviour. Indeed, there are even those who are rather surprised that he's still alive.

Your writer, for example, has been concerned for some time that A New Rock Casualty could shortly be up there jamming with Jimi and Duane. Scott Gorham has also been a little worried about the activities of his playing partner, as he tells me when I see him in his Putney flat.

On the just completed British tour, for example, Brian — who was into carting a bottle of Black Label Scotch around with him everywhere he went — obviously got pretty heavily into the falling-down-gets-you-accepted syndrome. Bradford even saw him *SPLOSH* on his ass onstage to be helped up by the roadies.

"It's a drag cos he's a helluva nice guy," says Scott. "I've probably laughed harder with Brian than with anyone else in the band. But there seem to be more times now when I don't wanna know than there are the good times."

On the other hand, Scott is only too aware that Brian — who joined the band when he was only seventeen and a half — might just be going through One Of Those Bad Patches that we all seem to hit now and then.

"It's weird to see a guy going through the stuff that you've already gone through," remarks Scott, who, like all people from LA, has waist-length hair and one-time millionaire parents. "I should have been dead a long time ago because of all the shit I used to do with my brother-in-law, Bobby. Strung out on fucking downers, going into the heroin thing. I've been busted eight times, actually in jail eight times. My old man and my lawyer had to come down each time and go to court.

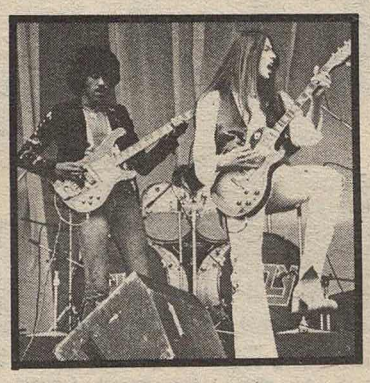
"Once in Yuma, Arizona, I was loaded on downers and we'd had all our money stolen. This guy comes up to me, sees that I'm an easy hit. Says 'Hey, listen, I got this party going down on the beach. I wondered if you got anything you could sell me,' So I says *'Sho-o-o-o-ore,* man. Anything you need.'

"I thought *'Gre-ea-eat.* We can sell a bit of dope here and get some gas money and get home.' So I took him over and took the stash out of the exhaust pipe: 'Take your pick.' He takes his pick. And I say 'Listen, why don't you come on back later and we can have a little bit of a party.'

"Three o'clock in the morning I'm crashed out by the Colorado River and I get woken up by two guys grabbing my ankles and two guys pulling me up by my wrists and another guy with a flashlight and a badge in my face saying 'You're under arrest for sale of marijuana.' The guy was an undercover cop and I'd sold right to him."

Scott was facing two-to-five years in the Arizona State Penitentiary for committing the felony of dealing. One is given the impression that an exchange of money saved him for the ranks of the band.

This all ended for Scott about six years back when he turned twenty: "I was strung out on downers for about four years. It's a heavy physical thing coming off them but it's an even heavier thing mentally; incredible depression. I was crying all the time."



For a while longer he lived the life that thousands of LA musicians lead: playing in parties some, but mostly staying stoned and in bed. "In California it's real easy to get lazy — sitting there catching the rays. You smoke a joint and it's so hot outside you don't feel like doing anything. 'Ah well, I'll just stay in bed'," he laughs.

Meantime, brother-in-law Bobby C. Benburg, he with whom he Used To Do All That Shit, had moved over to England where he'd scored a drummer's gig with Supercharge. A guitarist's gig with the band was also possibly available.

"Come on over and join us," Bobby messaged Scott. By the time sceptical Scott — who'd visited England the previous year in 1972 and made an album with a band called Hands Across that went nowhere — got his act together and came over Supercharge were already halfway into their album. Scott seemed to get hit with the jolt his Piscean nature needed to stop him merely drifting away: "For the first time in my life I went out and hustled for myself instead of other people hustling for me."

He formed a pub band, Fast Buck. "I was like a one-man hustling show," he recalls, "Getting the band together, getting the rehearsal room together, going out to the pubs, hustling the band onto pubs. It was great therapy to actually get out there and push myself, because I'd always been a shy person who was never convinced that I was any good at playing guitar."

Fast Buck went from playing five nights a week to three nights a week and then to two nights a week. With a fine Californian sense of positive thinking, Scott had hustled the band into obscure pubs where they had never had rock and certainly didn't *need* rock. Not only did the pubs' profits fail to rise, they actually went down.

"And after a while I was making twelve quid a week and my bills came to fifteen quid a week."

The Californian was saved from this very British financial state by Ruan O'Lochlaun, at that time working some of the same musical circuit as Scott with Bees Make Honey. He know this band that had had one hit with a record called "Whisky In The Jar", and who needed a guitarist to go with the other guitarist, Brian Robertson, that had joined them two weeks previously.

"I went down to the club where they were rehearsing," says Scott, "And Phil looked like a real moody bastard sitting up on the amp. This big heavy-looking spade guy. And Brian Robertson, the punk who wouldn't give you a look-in. And Brian Downey just wouldn't say anything to anybody. I thought it was a kind of weird outfit. 'What have I walked into?' I'm trying to be all 'How yuh doin'?' And they just didn't want to know."

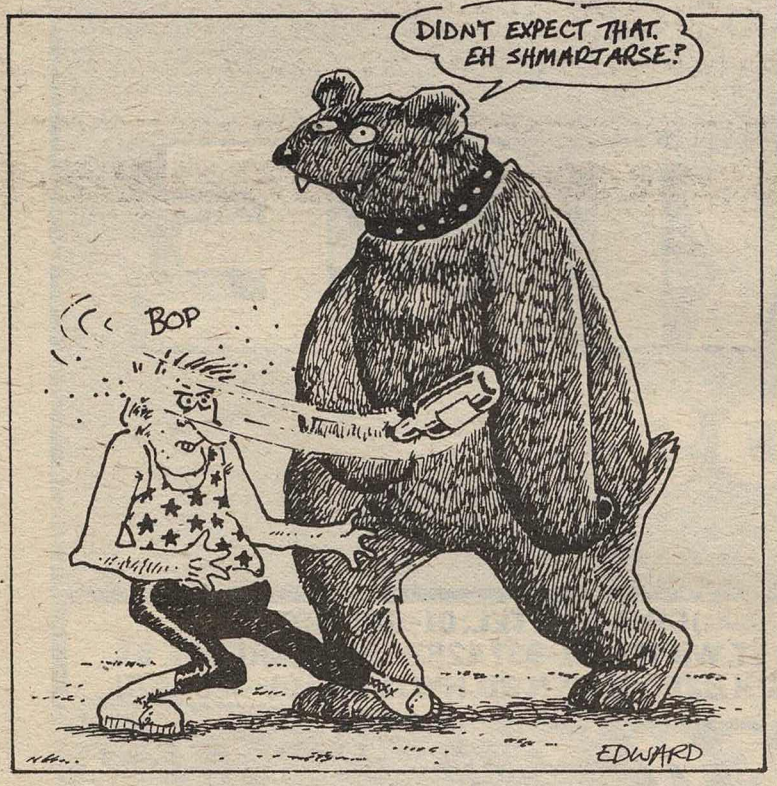
The three Lizzy members taught Scott some of their numbers and the four of them had a blow. "And at the end of the day they were all huddled together and I thought 'That's that', and I started to walk out of the club thinking 'At least I gave it a try.' I asked Phil, 'Can I get your phone number?' And he pulls out this tiny piece of paper and writes it really small.

"I thought, that was a definite 'No.' I said 'Okay, I'll see you later' and walked out. And Phil called out 'Hey, listen, why don't you come back tomorrow?'

"And then he called me up that night and asked me to join the band.

"He really was a moody bastard, though, when I first met him. Tried to be the real heavy, really aloof. 'Don't get too close cos you might not be around too long'," Scott recalls and laughs loudly.

"He seems like the kind of guy who can be very stand-offish but as soon as the barriers are broken down he can be the nicest guy in the whole world. But he *can* be heavy."



BEAR-WRESTLE YOUR WAY THRU COLLEGE!

***NEXT TIME** you're having hassles at school, spare a thought for 20-year-old Californian Vic Herrick, who's paying for his college education by . . . . . wrestling with a 375lb drunken bear!*

Pooh, the North American black bear, wrestles with Vic five times daily in the "Wonders of the Wild" show at Marriot's Great America in Santa Clara, California. "It's not dangerous because the bear doesn't have his canine teeth," cute blond Vic told The Star. *"It's not like bullfighting. We don't appeal to the bloodthirsty instincts of people. At first it looks like I'm being attacked, but the audience catches on pretty quickly. The important thing is to keep from being flattened out."*

Pooh, who is seven years old, recently replaced an older bear, Oscar, who was getting jaded. "Oscar was losing interest," says Vic. "He was also getting mean. He'd bite my upper arm, which is not at all pleasant."

Bears are very easy to tame because they like grape juice, which is what Pooh drinks during the act. Bears are very nimble and can hold bottles well, and Pooh is rewarded with apples, oranges, grapes and honey.

"Bears really do love honey," says Vic. "They almost get high on it."

Out of the bear ring, Vic likes to relax with his rabbits, geese, birds, bees, a black hen named Aretha . . . and an 11-foot python named Baby.

JULIE BURCHILL

"ROOM SERVICE? SEND UP BRIAN WILSON, PLEASE."

BRIAN WILSON IS the Beach Boys.

Healthy in his Plaza Hotel suite the afternoon before the first of the Beach Boys' sell-out Madison Square Garden shows, he wasn't talking to anyone except his wife, his shrink and his bodyguard. No press no how.

The two dozen hacks milling round the hotel lobby caught the drift and resigned themselves to a non-event. It was quite clear that a rap with Brian was as unlikely as a lunch date between George Wallace and Idi Amin.

In the mood for adventure, I began to explore the environs of the lush Plaza. Taking the elevator in search of food I lucked onto two enterprising groupies with a room in the hotel. They had checked in for the sole purpose of meeting The Beach Boys, and upon regaling room-service discovered that their waiter was none other than he who had just catered for Mr. Wilson. Reanne and Doris were delighted and pressed for more hot gossip, with yours truly grabbing a pen and Plaza stationary.

Mr. Wilson was being interviewed, revealed the waiter, and seemed to be in pretty good spirits and very anxious to please the newsman.

Just fine, thought this reporter, but how about me and two dozen jerks waiting downstairs? The waiter recollected Brian saying he enjoyed interviews and had written a dozen songs in two weeks.

For Brian the first move had been to get out of bed. His psych had diagnosed the case as schizophrenia, with which Brian felt able to cope. Life was now a series of disciplines, with the gradual withdrawal of the shrink, with whom he'd won a fist fight, but he lost because he cried, the release of his hostility due to the exhorbitant fees charged by the doc.

Brian takes algebraic lessons for discipline's sake, plus a daily gym workout to reduce the tyre around his waist acquired during his years of inactivity. Net result is two albums of new material, the titles of which Brian named — but the waiter couldn't recall. A press officer later revealed that they are "New Album" and "Brian Loves You".

Brian says he doesn't do drugs, though a little speed once in a while might stimulate his creative urge, not to mention his sex drive. But acid is out; all he trips on now is positive life.

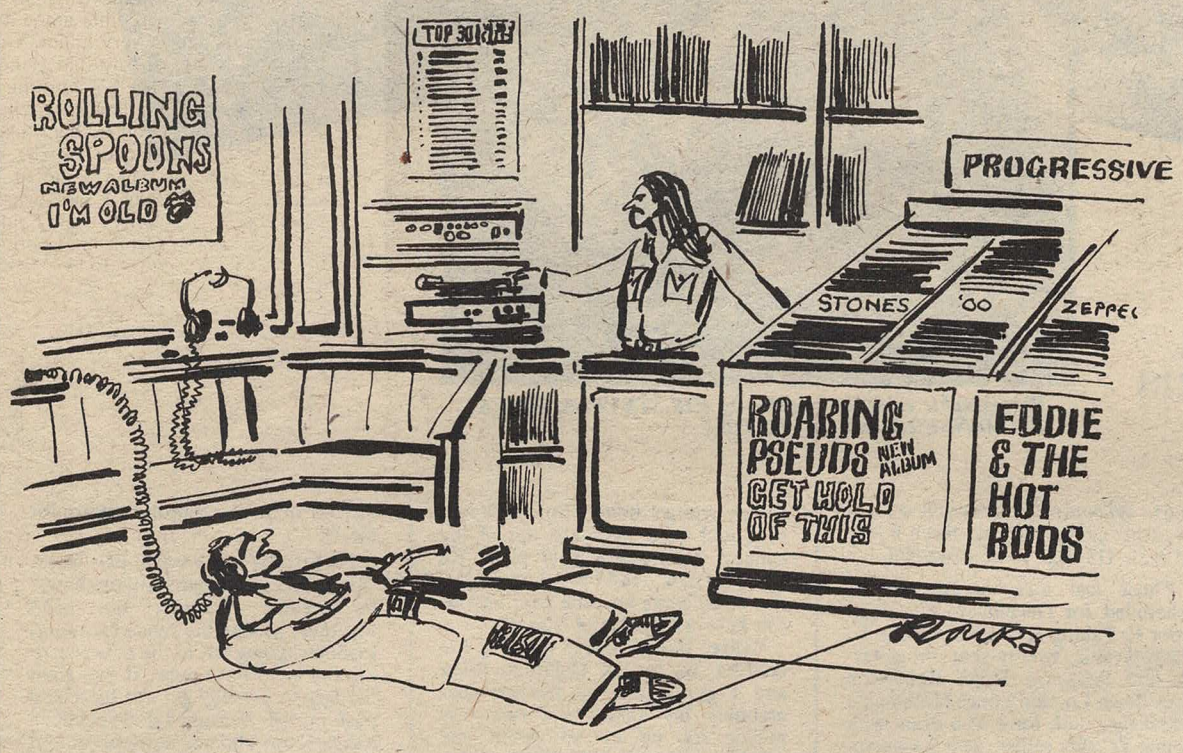
A waiter at the Plaza Hotel knocks down a nice living so when our friend noticed this scribe taking hurried notes he insisted on anonymity. Reanne assisted him with the room service cart and we thanked him for an enlightening chat whereupon he departed, leaving Reanne and Doris and I alone.

East Coast girls are hip — very hip.

JOE STEVENS

"You called sir?" The Greta Garbo of surf materialises on Joey's TV screen.

LOWRY



"I can't tell whether or not I like it until I've heard it lying on my back stoned out of my crust."

CARLOS SANTANA — or "Devadip" according to his red satin band jacket — was sitting alone in his dressing room, next to a large framed colour photograph of his Guru, Sri Chinmoy, and a bouquet of flowers from a fan.

We were at the Winter Gardens in Bournemouth. Outside it was dark and raining and there had been a lot of fog on the motorway on the way down. It was the exact opposite of the outdoor festivals in the California sun that I've always associated with his music.

He now has a completely new line-up (with the exception of keyboards man Tom Foster) and so the first thing I asked was how he had decided on it.

"I think I just aspired for certain musicians with certain qualities — and they came along. In reality I just absolutely feel that Sri Chimnoy's doing it. I told him what I need. People were going in and out of the band, they were going in and out over a period of about three months, different drummers, different this, different that, until the right one came along who had the right qualities: no dope, very consistent, very clean, open minded, a lot of dynamism, a lot of fire, and most of all, a lot of sincerity — which is very hard to get nowadays."

Santana seems to be moving in a more consciously Latin direction and I asked if he chose this lineup specially to achieve this. The answer was yes . . .

"I like to branch out and play different forms of music. Right now I feel that I'm using, not abusing, the Latin music as a tool — to express what I learnt from Mahavishnu (John McLaughlin). Latin music is very contageous, you know. Mahavishnu chose Indian music to express his mission or duty here on Earth, I'm choosing Latin music for right now. Tomorrow I may be into funk or Brazilian music — but right now I'm into Latin.

"I don't necessarily want to make anybody meditate or cram it down anybody's throat — even if they don't clap I wouldn't really mind — as long

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GOD FLOWS FROM EVERY MOUTH

AND THAT DON'T MEAN GOBBIN' ON PEOPLE, WARNS SANTANA

as they've been dancing. I like people to dance."

I wondered if the rapid growth of interest in Salsa in the States was in any way responsible for his swing back towards Latin.

"I don't even like Salsa music, man, to be quite honest. To me it's very binding. Very few people do anything new with it aside from Eddie Palmieri — everything is rehashed. What I do, since I know very little about it, is use it the best way I can to express all the things I'm learning from other people, like Miles (Davis)."

On stage he seemed to be very concerned with giving signals to the group. Does he normally keep everything under such tight control or was it because it is such a new group?

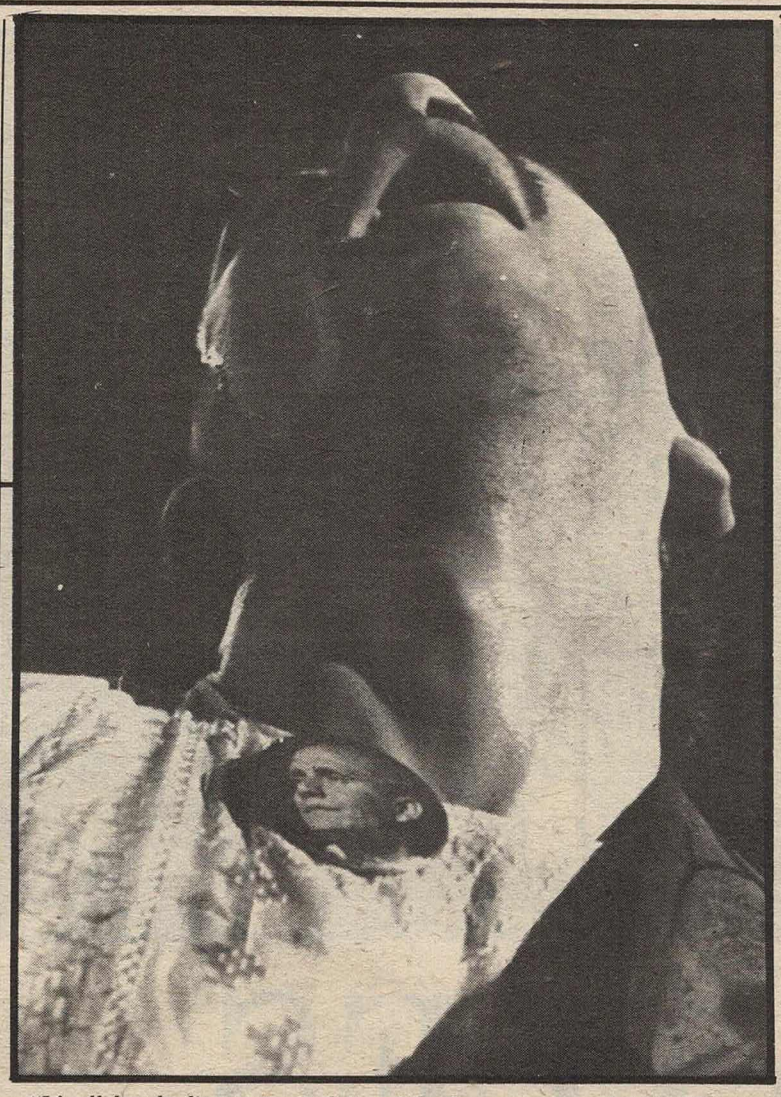
"I feel that eventually it'll just be eye-contact. We'll all know what's happening. But right now it's a very very young band. I like it because there's a lot of fire and people don't question my motives as much. I feel very reassured and I'm not gonna take a back seat anymore. With the other bands I did — because I wasn't sure what I was doing. That doesn't mean I'm gonna be a dictator, it just means I'm gonna fight more for what I want, and if it's wrong they have to show it to me.

The new band wasn't well received by the critics at Wembley who thought that Santana had retreated from the progressive direction of "Caravanserai" and "Welcome" back to the commercial safety of "Abraxas" and his recent "Amigos." With a band as new as this, there is no way he could have attempted anything other than standard repertoire plus greatest hits until they are more together. Also in his case, a swing toward Latin can be claimed as a return to roots — something regarded as quite acceptable to rock bands, so why not for latin-rock bands?

The band was under-rehearsed. In fact Luther Rabb replaced Greg Walker on vocals only two weeks before they left for England. Drummer Graham Lear joined at the same time. ". . . not till a week ago did we actually come onstage as a band."

I asked him if he thought the artist had a role in society and he responded with enthusiasm: "Exactly. He has a role to perform 24 hours a day. I mean, a *good* musician does. A *great*-musician is great on stage for maybe two hours and could be extremely obnoxious for the rest of the 24 hours. A *good* musician is good 24 hours.

"He tries to inspire, he tries to be . . . in tune with God. Just try for that. It's hard but it's not impossible. It's getting easier for me because drugs don't appeal to me and temptation with women . . . is almost a thing of the past now."



"It's all done by discreet manipulation of the throat muscles and the Sri Chinmoy button," Senor Santana informs an awestruck CHALKIE DAVIES.

I would have thought that he must experience some conflict between his spiritual life and his life in the rock business which is so full of drugs, sex, cussin' and corruption — at least it's supposed to be.

"There would be a conflict if I were to treasure thoughts of being alone, of of chicks, or of sneaking off on the side and smoking pot or whatever. It would bind me, but since I've been through all that I'm aware of what binds you and what makes you free. Anything that makes you nervous, paranoid or insecure, like drugs do, possesses you.

"There's a few musicians around who are really struggling with their minds to truly manifest God in their own way and to reveal him and build him in their own way. It's hard. I have to say that tit is very very hard . . ."

This seemed like the appropriate time to ask what he thought of Automatic Man, since Michael Shrieve and the whole band had expressed a very similar view when I interviewed them. It seems that Santana doesn't really think all that much of them . . .

"I thought their philosophy was very mental myself and anything that comes from the mind, it's an illusion you know." Well, you can't get a heavier put-down than that. Santana tried to qualify it a little.

"I love Michael Shrieve. I respect Michael Shrieve. But I can tell the difference between being and trying to be. It's two different things. Anyway they already broke apart."

This must come as a bit of a shock to Island Records, who allegedly invested a cool £100,000 in the group. They should have asked Carlos about them before they signed the cheque, he knew . . . "See, I knew this wasn't gonna work — because Michael and Pat (Thrall), the guitar player — are the only persons that have dynamism. Bayete has an incredible amount of imagination but is very hollow — to me, and I have to say that (I hope he'll forgive me). There's some music, man, that is like a hollow pumpkin. It looks good on the outside but take a bite and the substance is really not what you need. I like some of his imagination, but like I said, what I need is to feel sincerity — and I didn't get that vibration from him, period.

"Michael Shrieve — to me Michael Shrieve is like a little kid, man, he's looking for it and I respect that. He's a wanderer and he's seeking. I don't feel like I've found it yet but I'm a little closer. We're both seekers of the truth, the transcendental truth, man.

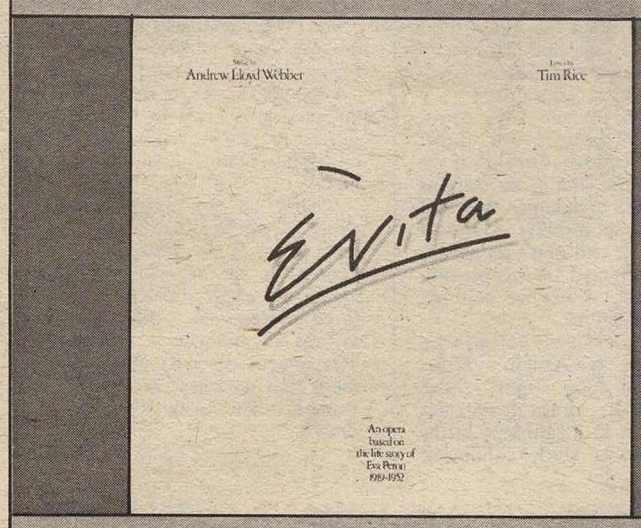
Whatever else Santana's doing, and whichever way his music is tending, the most obvious development is the greater economy in his actual playing. He uses hardly any notes.

"I'm learning from Miles Davis and Wayne Shorter, man, because a lot of times I listen back to my sounds and I think, 'God, it sounds like I'm choking somebody, whaaat . . .' cramming in so many notes in one place.

"Just say 'I love you.' Don't say 'Why?' or 'How?' but just say 'I love you' in a phrase. Miles and Wayne Shorter — they can say three notes, man, and they could go home . . ."

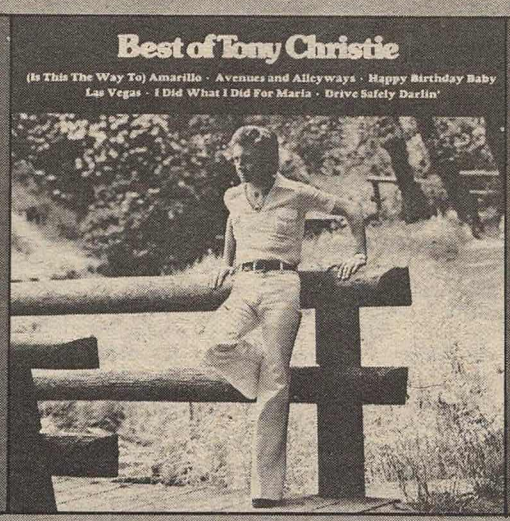
MILES

FIRING ON ALL SIX!



Evita MCX 503
(2 RECORD SET)

Wishbone Ash – New England MCG 3523


Best of Tony Christie
(Is This The Way To) Amarillo · Avenues and Alleyways · Happy Birthday Baby
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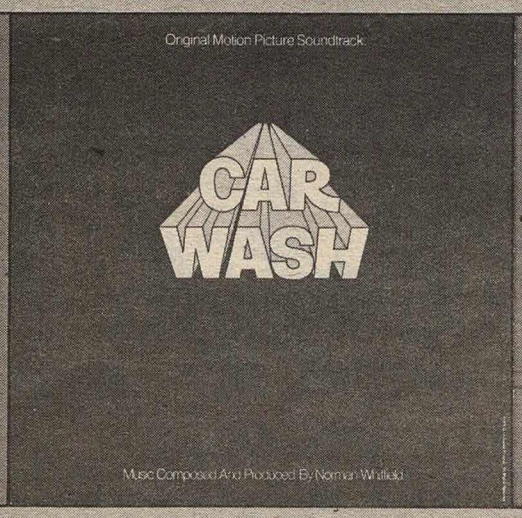
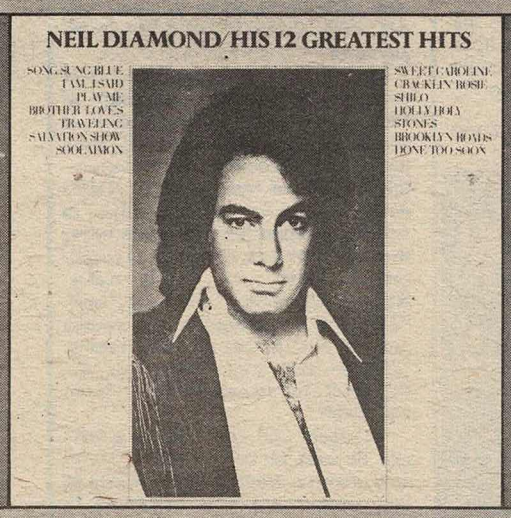
The Best of Tony Christie MCF 2769



Car Wash MCSP 278
(2 RECORD SET)



Neil Diamond – His 12 Greatest Hits MCF 2550

Lynyrd Skynyrd – One More From The Road MCSP 279
(2 RECORD SET)

MCA RECORDS

MOPTOPS: Even the clowning had to stop.

BEATLES
FINALLY — THE LENNON LOWDOWN

IT WAS HIS successful appearance with The Plastic Ono Band at the Toronto Peace Festival in September 1969 that finally persuaded John Lennon to leave the Beatles.

A new book shortly to be published in the States by Grove Press — *John Lennon: One Day At A Time, A Personal Biography*, an extract of which is published in this month's *Crawdaddy* magazine — reveals fresh information about the Beatles bust-up. The book was written by Anthony Fawcett, an English art critic who was Lennon's personal assistant from 1968 to 1970.

In accordance with what Lennon told *Rolling Stone* in a 1971 interview, Fawcett says Lennon's decision to quit was finally intimated to Paul McCartney and manager Allen Klein at a tempestuous meeting at Apple headquarters a month after the Toronto gig, a meeting from which Lennon returned, "red in the face and fuming with rage." 'That's it, it's all over!' he shouted as he sank into the leather chair."

It was not until some six months after this momentous confrontation, however, that the general public became aware of the Beatles' break-up, when McCartney suddenly announced *he* was quitting via a barrage of national newspaper headlines. To the chagrin of the other Beatles, he also announced the release of his first solo album, "McCartney", which was scheduled to appear the same day as the Beatles final album, "Let It Be".

Lennon was particularly incensed about the style of McCartney's sudden declaration of independence since he (Lennon) had been persuaded by Klein not to announce his decision to quit back in the previous autumn. This so as not to jeopardise the profusion of negotiations about the Beatles' future financial and business arrangements.

The roots of the break-up went back a long way of course; to Brian Epstein's death, when Paul "decided to carry on as if nothing had happened," and, apparently, to McCartney's hogging too much of the available space on Beatles albums, and his habit of getting his songs on the 'A' sides of Beatles' singles (although both John and Paul's songs were still being credited to 'Lennon McCartney').

As he told Paul: "If you look back on the Beatles' albums you'll find that if anyone's got extra time it's *you!* Now, when we get into a studio I don't want to go through a little manoeuvring, or whatever level it's on to get (studio) time. Cause there was a time, three or four years ago, when I gave up fighting for an 'A' side or fighting for time . . . I didn't have the energy or the nervous type of thing to push it, so I relaxed a bit. Nobody else relaxed, so gradually I was submerging."

Lennon was also embarrassed by some of McCartney's recent output. He particularly disliked the lightweight singalongs "Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da" on the White Album, and "Maxwell's Silver Hammer" on "Abbey Road". Macca himself admitted he "wasn't stuck on them".

"Why don't you give them to Mary Hopkin?" asked John. "The only time we need stuff vaguely that quality is for a single. For an album we could do only stuff that we really dig."

Evidently there was also tension in the group about the way George Harrison's songs had been neglected, and excluded from both albums and singles before 1969. Apparently, none of the other Beatles played on any of the Harrison songs on the White Album, where he was supported by, among others, Eric Clapton.

It is also revealed that after Lennon had arranged to play the Toronto Peace Festival with Eric Clapton, Klaus Voormann, and Alan White as his back-up band, he changed his mind about the gig at the last minute. "Send them a telegram to cancel it — and a big bunch of white flowers, with love from John and Yoko," he instructed. It was an eleventh hour phone call from Clapton that finally got Lennon out of bed and onto the plane in the nick of time.

□ NEIL SPENCER

WOMEN TURN TO CRIME — official

WHEN WERE YOU last assaulted by an amorous bandit? Robbed by a rapacious redhead? Well, if it wasn't recently, you don't know what you're missing — because the rate of female arrests has soared 100% in the last 15 years!

The National Enquirer, talking to top criminologists, point to a growing reluctance on the part of women to rely on men for financial support, and also on the tendency of TV to glamourise female hoods. Not to mention the rising number of women employed in executive positions which accounts for the growth of embezzlement!

"Women are leaving home more and more", says Dr Bill Gelfant, of Fort Lauderdale's Criminal Justice Department. "They are mentally and philosophically independent, but they don't have all the opportunities to be economically independent yet. The worst thing in the world to them is to admit defeat, so many of them turn to crime.

"If they have a choice to move back with their husbands or to steal, they will steal. Crime is not a last resort anymore."

Mr Marvin Wolfgang, Director of Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania, says: "The number of chances for women to commit crime has risen. Women are now responsible for 31% of embezzlement. There never used to be women involved in corporate crime because there never used to be women in high level corporate positions". Dr Frieda Adler, Rutgers University sociologist, says: "The new opportunities for women provide new access to crime routes. Whereas the homemaker was the shoplifter, the female executive is the embezzler.

"Robbery and other crimes generally thought to be masculine crimes now involve women. The reason is that women are now beginning to think, if they're going to take a risk they should do it for bigger stakes."

Send women back to the kitchens and clean up the streets!

□ JULIE BURCHILL

"Enough of this stuff!"

SEX 'N' VIOLENCE MAKE A COMEBACK

AFTER SEVERAL years out of the limelight the perennial issue of sex and drugs in rock and roll is back in the headlines. First to dust off this old chestnut was the American National Association of Broadcasters, that august body of men who defend the nations morals through the content of its radio. At their annual gathering in Atlanta recently much was made of the rise in sex and drug related music and its members were reminded of their duty to stem the flow.

More militant was the attitude of a new civil rights association called Operation PUSH which stands for People United to Save Humanity. Spearheaded by their energetic parson, the Rev Jesse L Jackson, they deplore the general drop in moral standards and plan to rally their members in an all out attempt to convince the music and radio industry that it's time for a clean up.

Rev Jackson opines: "We know that we must prepare for direct action, like a boycott, because if we don't the lyricists, the radio stations and the record companies will not assume the responsibility to do it themselves. Our children's minds are so adversely affected by this prevailing radio ethic, which we call sex without responsibility."

He quotes as evidence for his case such waxings as "It's Alright to Make Love On Your First Night", "The More You Do It", drags in statistics of the huge rise in illegitimate births and even cites a study conducted among 1,000 unmarried pregnant girls in North Hollywood High School by *Jet* magazine, which showed that 90% of them did it to the rhythms of songs with suggestive lyrics.

This clarion call from the Disinfectant generation was soon picked up by NOW, the National Organisation of Women, who, along with other militant femmes of the Women Against Violence Against Women club warned seven Warner record labels — Atco, Atlantic, Asylum, Elektra, Nonesuch, Reprise and Warner Brothers — that they face a nationwide organised boycott unless they stop using women as sex objects or violence victims in their artwork on albums and promotional material.

Citing the Rolling Stones Black and Blue advertising campaign as a prime example, Julia London WAVAW spokeswoman, said the Warner group were one of the prime offenders. She stated: "Our emphasis at this point is on the use of abusive sex in sexual relationships as a selling technique . . . It has an impact on the daily life of millions of women in that they are subject to, threatened by or fear rape or brutal treatment at the hands of men."

"What we are saying is that the depiction in the album covers and the advertising is an impact force, and people in the advertising industry agree that images in advertising reinforce stereotypes, and women as victims of violence is a stereotype. The images are part of an environment that trivialises brutality against women." The battle lines are being drawn.

□ DICK TRACY

R. Crumb
©1976 by R. Crumb
the village VOICE November 29, 1976
HI FOLKS...I...UH...I'VE BEEN READING SOME OF THESE LETTERS THE 'VOICE' HAS BEEN GETTING ABOUT THE DISCONTINUATION OF THE MR. NATURAL STRIP AND...UM... I'M DEEPLY TOUCHED, I REALLY AM, BUT I FEEL I MUST CLEAR THE AIR...I HAVE TO GET THE "VOICE" OFF THE HOOK...
THEY DIN'T STOP THE MR. NATURAL STRIP...I QUIT DRAWING IT...IT WAS TOTALLY MY OWN DECISION...I COULDN'T GO ON WITH IT...NOT BECAUSE OF THE 'VOICE'...IN FACT, GIL TRIED VERY HARD TO DISSUADE ME...OH, I HAD A FEW BUREAUCRATIC HASSLES WITH THEM, BUT THAT'S NOT UNUSUAL...AND THE PAY WAS VERY GOOD... ...BUT, YA SEE, I...
I... I GUESS I'M JUST NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS REGULAR STRIP BUSINESS...I THOUGHT I COULD DO IT...I WAS MOTIVATED BY THE ECONOMIC SECURITY...A REGULAR WEEKLY CHK FOR THAT KIND OF MONEY LOOKED REAL GOOD... BUT...I CAN'T HANDLE IT...THE 'VOICE' WAS VERY NICE ABOUT IT...GIL SAID I WAS ALWAYS WELCOME TO COME BACK IF I WANTED TO... AND I'M TOUCHED BY THE RESPONSE IN THE LETTER COLUMN... IT'S ALL VERY TOUCHING, BUT... MY ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT... MEAN... UNPREDICTABLE GENIUS SHALL WE SAY... HAS NOW GRUFF OFF YOUR ORDERS AND RECOMMENCED...
TALK TO LARRY
ARE YOU FINISHED??
YEAH... I'VE HAD MY SAY... CAN WE GO HOME NOW?
STRONG GIRL
SURE... HOP ON!!
GOOT! I GET A RIDE!
HUP!
SO LONG FOLKS!
END

CRUMB BOWS OUT

***R. CRUMB, GODFATHER OF** the underground comic and star of the Cheap Suit Serenaders, hammered another nair into the coffin of the Sixties when he terminated his Mr. Natural strip in New York's 'Village Voice'. This means, in effect, the last regular bastion of the classic U/G comic has fallen. Take a long look, you may never see the like again.*

SINGLES

Hot 'n' sweaty Cool 'n' funky

Little Bob and Little Stevie share honours

With their bridgehead at Chiswick, Little Bob Story are well-positioned to sail down the Thames and conquer London.

SINGLE OF THE WEEK
NUMBER ONE
LITTLE BOB STORY: I'm Crying / Come On Home / I Need Money / Baby Don't Cry (Chiswick). If you ain't heard the *francais* Oil City Rivvum 'n' Blooze high octane neo-Detroit sound of Little Bob Story yet, then you haven't been paying attention to this illustrious rag recently.

The excellent Chiswick label has fully captured the essence of the band on this steaming slice of vinyl, the high point being the Frogais version of the *Animeaux* classic "I'm Crying," or "Je Suis Pleut" as the Le Havre mohair contingent like to refer to it. Robert Piazza handles vocals so well that you could be forgiven for believing that he was one of the unlucky people who weren't blessed with an Essex upbringing. He deserves to be a star, but is probably too fat and milk-bottle-bespectacled to make it really big. Still while Little Bob Story are making records like this — who cares? Robert Piazza and the rest of L.B.S., that's who.

Singles reviewed by TONY PARSONS

SINGLE OF THE WEEK
NUMBER TWO
STEVIE WONDER: I Wish (Motown). In the season of goodwill to all men and lousy records to all single reviewers it's like really weird, man, to have no less than *two* singles of the week. However, Stevie Wonder fully deserves to be up there at the top of the heap with this track lifted from the "Songs In The Key Of Life" album. It's been a long time coming, and he insists on making albums that I can't afford, but I've loved the music that this character makes for so long and the fact that he can still deliver the goods after all this time gives me more pleasure than any flesh-coloured Christ that glows in the dark. Sly keyboard lines, clean tight funky rhythm section, Stax yellow-label horns, slurred stoned vocals and much more. Thanks for everything, Stevie.

DAVID SOUL: Don't Give Up On Us (Private Stock). One of the TV cops' answer to the Odd Couple. It looks as though, with his album charting at 20, David Soul can win over the hearts and the wallets of millions even when not holding his partner's hand. Balladeering strings and don't give up on us, baby. Actually he hasn't got a bad voice. But would you trust Lassky or Crutch to search your kid brother?

SHIRLEY BASSEY: Can't Take My Eyes Off You (United Artists). What a strange record. The Bailey's Night Club goldie is given the treatment you'd expect from the woman from Tiger Bay, but the backing track is *veeeeeery* weird. It's as though the producer or some nameless cigar-smoker in a toupee and a three-piece Take Six "with-it" suit has decided that Shirl should be appealing to the youth market, baybee, and has stuck an almost unbelievably simplistic pseudo-funk riff behind her torcherama vocal. Only for non-discerning mums.

FRANKLIN AJAYE: Don't Smoke Dope, Fry Your Hair (Little David). Ajaye fancies himself as a kind of spade version of a modern Lenny Bruce, making fun of his pigmentation of skin whereas Lenny did the same (and a million times funnier and truer) with his Jewish heritage. Dope, sex, race all delivered in a hip drawl with background chuckles of nightclub audience. The record makes me slightly sick. Avoid it like the pox, and check out and love an album entitled "The Law, The Language and Lenny Bruce."

THE DODGERS: Down (Island). "I'm down, I'm Down." Me, too, me too. Maybe it's down to the tight-harmonied love-lost muzak yor're making lads. Produced by Muff Winwood, who can surely find more worthwhile projects to devote his time to.

FLYING SAUCERS: Keep On Coming (Alaska). The Flying Saucers have got a lotta guts. When none of the big record corporations would release their first album they put their cash into it themselves and released it themselves on the Nova label. Now it's a bleeding collectors item, innit? Just goes to prove that the giant record companies should use imagination instead of old sales figures when looking at talent noveau. This single is purist rock 'n' roll that is so like the real '50s thing that it could even appeal to the clientele of the Black Raven, Bishopsgate. Alright, lads?

ROOKIE: Bad News (Pinnacle). Attempted, albeit failed, pseudo-funk seasonal silliness. People get away with murder this time of the year, don't they?

DIANE SOLOMON: Queen Of The Rodeo (EMI). Fazed acoustic country cornball boredom. Somewhere Gram Parsons is reviewing this record and laughing. Or crying.

THE AURIE JOHNSON ORCHESTRA: The New Avengers (EMI). If you're a six-hour-a-night TV zomboid then you'll cream your jeans over this one, even if Joanna Lumley doesn't project the sheer animal horniness of the blonde bird in Abba.

THE MOMENTS: Jack In The Box (All Platinum). Boring disco fare concerning Goldilocks, the three bears and other such nursery stuff. Strictly for dancing shoes females who have yet to encounter the first sproutings of puberty.

SPARROW: Bionic Love (Bronze). Seems like there's always some catchphrase of movement or whatever that music entrepreneurs can cash in on and exploit generally. Two years ago it was Kung Fu. Now it's (ho hum) all this bionic crap. "You're my bionic baby, I'm your bionic man." Stuff like this makes Jackson Browne look profound. Anything labelled bionic you should treat with the contempt it deserves and immediately recycle.

STELLA PARTON: I Want To Hold You In My Dreams Tonight (Mint). The subculture of apple pies, truck-driving mothers, good old boys and lynched niggers. I don't know if she's related to Dolly, but if she is, the day these country folk stick together, then she could make it. Thanks for the mammeries, Dolly.

STANLEY BLACK AND HIS ORCHESTRA: Discover The Tango (Decca). "Okay . . . you've tap-danced and waltzed and you loved it so howza bout trying the tango?"Gee, thanks for the offer, Stan, but — "You don't have to be Valentino!" Well, Stan, when I've got me F. Scott Fitzgerald gear on and me Byron Ferrari expression, people say I — "Just play the music, grab a member of the opposite, look deep into their eyes and off you go!" Stan tells me I've discovered the Tango.

This Christmas Mike Oldfield is Boxed.

"Mike Oldfield, as I have claimed here before, is the most important popular composer that this decade has so far produced. That, in itself, is reason enough to look at a new collection called Boxed."
Robin Denselow The Guardian

"... and if, like me, you believe that Mike Oldfield is for the 70's what The Beatles (say) were for the 60's then this whole set is absolutely essential listening and, at less than eight quid for four albums, a good way of picking up on the phenomenon for almost minimal cost."
Karl Dallas Melody Maker

Boxed is the celebrated Tubular Bells – the single most successful album ever released in England.
Boxed is Mike Oldfield's major re-working of Hergest Ridge.
Boxed is Ommadawn. The final part of Mike Oldfield's three thematically related solo albums.
Boxed is Collaborations, a new album from Mike Oldfield. On Side One, Mike's finest guitar solos with other musicians. On Side Two, Oldfield the whimsical adventurer. Collaborations brings right up to date the career of the 70's most acclaimed composer.
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SIDESWIPE

Harry and friend

WEAPONRY A GO GO and other cine treats...

THE ENFORCER

Directed by James Fargo

IF YOU LIKED *Dirty Harry* and *Magnum Force* then you'll love this one. Inspector Dirty Harry Callahan must be the only man in the San Francisco Police Department who can shoot a hood up the anus while he's running up some stairs and also blow his balls off *with the same bullet.*

The Enforcer sees Dirty Harry combating the forces of evil as WASP America sees them at this moment in time. Two gas truck drivers are chivved up and blown apart by ex-Vietnam psycho Bobby Maxwell after a horny female hitcher has lured them to a Manson type mountain retreat.

You've guessed it, Bobby and the girl want the truck for their own particular revolution. They keep saying old sixties / leftist cliches like, "This is for the people, man," as they murder and blow up and mutilate. The cinematic audience waits with bated breath for nemesis in the shape of Dirty Harry to put the quaintly long-haired anarchists in their place. i.e., the grave.

The incident with the 44 slug up the anus comes when Harry drives a car into the window of a liquor store where three hoods are holding three hostages until a getaway car is delivered. After Harry delivers the car into the shops he guns down the bad guys, does fifteen thousand dollars worth of damage and gets slagged down by his boss.

The hip young gunslinger is used to being the centre of trouble and his impassive face (Clint Eastwood is the antithesis of the Method — his boat's got about as much action as Wigan on a Saturday night) barely twitches as he turns away. But his police Captain shakes him when he tells him that he's being transferred to the personnel division to look after rookies.

Rebel without a clue that he is, Harry turns up late for his new job, just in time to meet Kate Moore who he baits as she tries for the vacant job of inspector. See, the mayor's got all these new fangled ideas about "Equal Rights For Women" which Harry don't rate. Of course, when Harry's partner gets wasted who replaces him? Black haired blue eyed Kate Moore, the new inspector, that's who.

"I never realised before, it's a war, isn't it?" Harry's partner's wife says to Harry as her spouse dies in hospital, so although it's all entertaining stuff, a glorious celebration of violence, the implications are quite heavy — Dirty Harry plays dirty because the law doesn't give him enough power to deal with the animals who haunt the land of Stars and Stripes fairly.

In the end though, by fair means and foul, (mostly extremely foul) he and Kate trap the revolutionaries on the island of Alcatraz, (there are some superb shots of Frisco throughout the movie) and, wouldn't you know it, just as Kate and Harry have earned each other's mutual respect the girl gets machine-gunned to death.

"Get 'em, Harry," she murmurs as she dies in his arms.

"You can count on it," he says and shoots them all down with his 44 except for the leader, Bobby Maxwell, who gets cornered in a high wooden tower. He begs for mercy as Harry blows him to flames and splinters with, wait for it, a bazooka.

They mayor of the city who the gang had been holding prisoner tells Harry that this is gonna be great for his career as the helicopter with the answered ransom demand of the gang lands on Alcatraz. Harry, still playing his role as a kind of ultraviolent Greek-chorus for the audience's reaction to police bureaucracy and weakness, gives the mayor the empty bazooka and turns and walks away in disgust.

This film is self-righteous, entertaining, funny and full of violence. But, like the song says, sometimes that's the only thing that makes any sense.

Tony Parsons

COOLEY HIGH

Directed by Michael Schultz

I FIRST SAW this movie on one of those blistering summer days last June. The film had already been well-received in the U.S., but even so it had failed to arouse interest in the essentially cautious film distribution bodies in the U.K.

So six months later it has finally received its London premiere, though it was no red-carpet job; it opened in downtown SW1 at the Classic, Victoria — hardly a venue calculated to excite a passionate critical response.

In fact, despite its surface charms, the film, being short on sex and violence and long on humour, humanity and the problems of being a teenager, is essentially low-profile. In any case it is thought, by those who decide these things, that films about black American communities do not have any partcular commercial potential in this country.

Which is absurd in some ways. Although it does have a certain ethnic charm, and some of the dialogue is electric stuff, the film has a simplicity of structure and a lump-in-the-throat finale that is practically Disneyan.

It is a conscious black version of "American Graffiti", the parallels extend even to the coda where the ultimate destiny of the leading players is revealed, which has been hoisted forward a half-dozen years so that the musical backdrop against which the events take place can feature all those classic songs of the first golden Motown era.

Set though not in Detroit, but Chicago, the film traces events in the lives of a bunch of adolescents of the Edwin G. Cooley Technical High school. The kids are alive, alert and recalcitrant; the sort we all like to identify with. Cochise and Preacher are the central characters, though Glynn Turman, who's superb as Preach, makes the film his own long before the end.

So the film aims to do nothing more than show a bunch of typically adolescent kids facing typically adolescent problems against a typically urban background of claustrophobic housing, petty crime and exuberant street life. There is, in fact, absolutely nothing new here, and some of the jokes are as old as the cinema itself.

This however is not meant as criticism. The film is thoroughly endearing and constantly enjoyable, mainly because the director, Michael Schultz eschews flashiness and pretentiousness and concentrates simply on narratative because the screenplay is first rate, and all the characters utterly convincing.

Plus, of course, the music is quite incomparable. After the opening credits unwind over the sounds of "Baby Love", the soundtrack motors through a tasteful selection of Motown magic, including "My Girl", "Reach Out, I'll Be There", "Roadrunner" and "Dancing In The Street" (amongst others), all the more impressive for being now heard in the context of the kind of urban environment in which they were originally created.

"Cooley High" is plain, straightforward entertainment; and that's all the recommendation anyone should need.

Bob Woffinden

THE RITZ

Directed by Dick Lester (Warner Brothers)

MURDER BY DEATH

Directed by Robert Moore (Columbia)

JUST HOW far American comedy has come since *I Love Lucy* is simply demonstrated by these two laugh-makers which even if they're not rolling-in-the-aisle material still manage to raise plenty of guffaws.

The Ritz, film version of successful Broadway play, is a new mutation produced by interbreeding the Mafioso and the gay joke in an unlikely tale of deception. Chubby Jack Weston plays the fall guy, pursued by his mad Mafioso brother-in-law and forced to take refuge in a gay bathhouse called *The Ritz*. Of course he doesn't know what he's getting into, and his escapades in the steam room, and his encounter with a chubby chaser are half the fun. The rest is provided by Rita Moreno playing a failed Puerto Rican cabaret singer intent on totally massacring the English Language, and such back up characters as Michael Brick (Treat Williams) the muscley private eye with the soprano voice. Lester once again demonstrates his comic class and needless to say the gay angle has earned this inoffensive epic an X rating. That's a laugh in itself.

Murder By Death out for a while and now on general release, is less slapstick, an affectionate parody by New York playwright Neil Simon on fictional detective heroes past and present. Truman Capote overplays the role of a hideous eccentric who invites a collection of the world's top sleuths to his ridiculous Gothic mansion to solve his own demise. All the characters are recognisable for crime aficionados and include the standout talents of Peter Sellers as wily Charlie Chan complete with Number One Son, and the inimitable Peter Falk storming his way through an outrageous Phillip Marlowe takeoff.

Their creepy home from home comes complete with a front door bell that produces a woman's scream when pressed and a blind butler nicely played by Alec Guiness. The plot is complicated, even the twists have twists, and the non-stop dialogue kept the audience at my local fleapit chortling throughout. My favourite scene is where the blind butler attempts to explain to the new kitchen maid how to make dinner. She's deaf and dumb and holds up notices to that effect which, of course, the butler can't see. Needless to say dinner never materialises.

Dick Tracey

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SCREEN DREEM

TIMES ARE changing in the kingdom of porn, which is where *Screen Dreem* turns its attention this week.

Despite many people's fears of being drowned in a sea of filth, hardcore porn in the cinema seems to have run its course.

Deep Throat grossed an estimated $7 million, but is now the subject of a big obscenity case in Memphis and super studman Harry Reems is still stomping the U.S. trying to raise some $200,000 to appeal a conviction for his *Throat* appearance.

So legal threats combined with a shrinking audience are again making film makers look elsewhere for their loot. After all, a hardcore pic will only be booked by a maximum 400 cinemas in the US, which limits the top gross to around $500,000 — a mere snip compared with legit figures.

Soft core is still booming however, and last year in the US 10% of movies released were X certificate. The most successful recently has been *Alice In Wonderland,* a promo musical comedy version of the kids' classic which has already grossed more than $5 million in its first few months of release. An equally dirty sequel called *The Wonderful Wizard Of Oz* is in production, while another company is boasting a rude *Cinderella* which claims to feature "37 of the Western World's most beautiful women in an erotic spectacular." Stranger still is the new movie from deep throat director Gerard Damiano. Called *Let My Puppets Come* it's a piece of erotica peopled entirely by hand-held puppets and marionettes. Kinky, eh?

Back on the scene also is veteran mammalian movie maker Russ Meyer, he of *Valley of the Dolls*, with *Up*, his first film to feature full frontal male nudity. So hugely proportioned are Meyer's female leads that the studs were reportedly fixed up with special equipment to make their organs look larger in long shot. So it goes.

The continental porn factory is still heaving merrily, despite signs that in France at least, the porn boom is over.

Emanuelle featuring nymphet Sylvia Kristel has already claimed 150 million attendances worldwide, and Ms Kristel, having finished the obligatory sequel, is now hard at work on a risque remake of Dumas's classic tale *Behind The Iron Mask* which also features surly Ursula Andress and debónair Rex Harrison. On release Continentally is *The Margin* in which she co-stars with Joe Dallesandro, Warhol's boy beautiful.

Meanwhile in Britain we continue to legislate porn out of existence. We will never see *Deep Throat, The Story Of O* or for that matter the new Pasolini movie, largely because, under British censorship laws, it is the exhibitors not the distributors who are liable for prosecution. Besides which the two main cinema cahins, Rank and ABS (EMI), are extremely conservative. The nearest whiff of filth, as in the case of Thorsen's *Sex Life of Christ* project, and the moral watchdogs stand on their hind legs and howl. A Tory MP has even gone as far as to introduce a Bill in the Commons to outlaw "blasphemous" films to stop anyone even *thinking* of such an idea again. You have been warned.

Crime buster, and paranoid extraordinaire **J. Edgar Hoover,** erstwhile head of the FBI, is the subject of what promises to be a hot little movie due out in '77. Titled *The private Files of . . .* it stars *Highway Patrol* king **Broderick Crawford** as the man himself backed by such names as **Jose Ferrer** and **Rip Torn.** Interesting thing is that is the first time an FBI film has been made without the Feds vetting the script and cast and with no agents loitering on the set, a standard feature of Fed films of the past.

FOREST LAWNS

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Now listen here Cratchit . . .
It was Christmas day in the workhouse in **Big Towne 2061**.
The **Starz** were out above us and the festivities had begun.
The paupers were **Wheelin' and Dealin'** and **Night Moves** were afoot.
I put my hand right up the chimney and pulled down three tons of soot.
I realised that **Livin' for Lovin'** was the only thing to do,
So relenting my feelings for Christmas, I further unblocked the flue.

Big Towne, 2061
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EA-ST 11560

Starz
STARZ
EA-ST 11539

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ASLEEP
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E-ST 11546

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BOB SEGER
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JACKIE LOMAX
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Believe it or not ...

BOB DYLAN, NEIL YOUNG, ERIC CLAPTON, JONI MITCHELL, NEIL DIAMOND, STEPHEN STILLS, VAN MORRISON and many others all show up to play as . . .

IT WAS BILLED as "The Last Waltz", suggesting some elegant historic requiem. A bit cheeky for a rock concert, but the conceit was fitting for the group that, eight years ago, christened themselves, with both arrogance and understatement, as simply "The Band".

This fall, they decided to end their touring career with this final concert that lead guitarist Robbie Robertson hoped would be "a party with our friends . . . like a New Orleans funeral."

The Band had a great deal to commemorate. They have spent sixteen years together, the first third of which was spent backing two legendary egomaniacs, Ronnie Hawkins and Bob Dylan. When they finally stepped out on their own, though, it was as a nearly faceless team with a reverence for roots and traditions that crossed the spectrum of traditional American music. They echoed gospel celebrations and sea shanteys, hillbilly laments, and brown bag R & B struts. They were an apparent contradiction: a drunken bar band of precision craftsmen. They cut a figure as nostalgic pioneers — bawdy, salty, seasick and determined. The best of their tunes were chiselled from some bedrock of American archetypes.

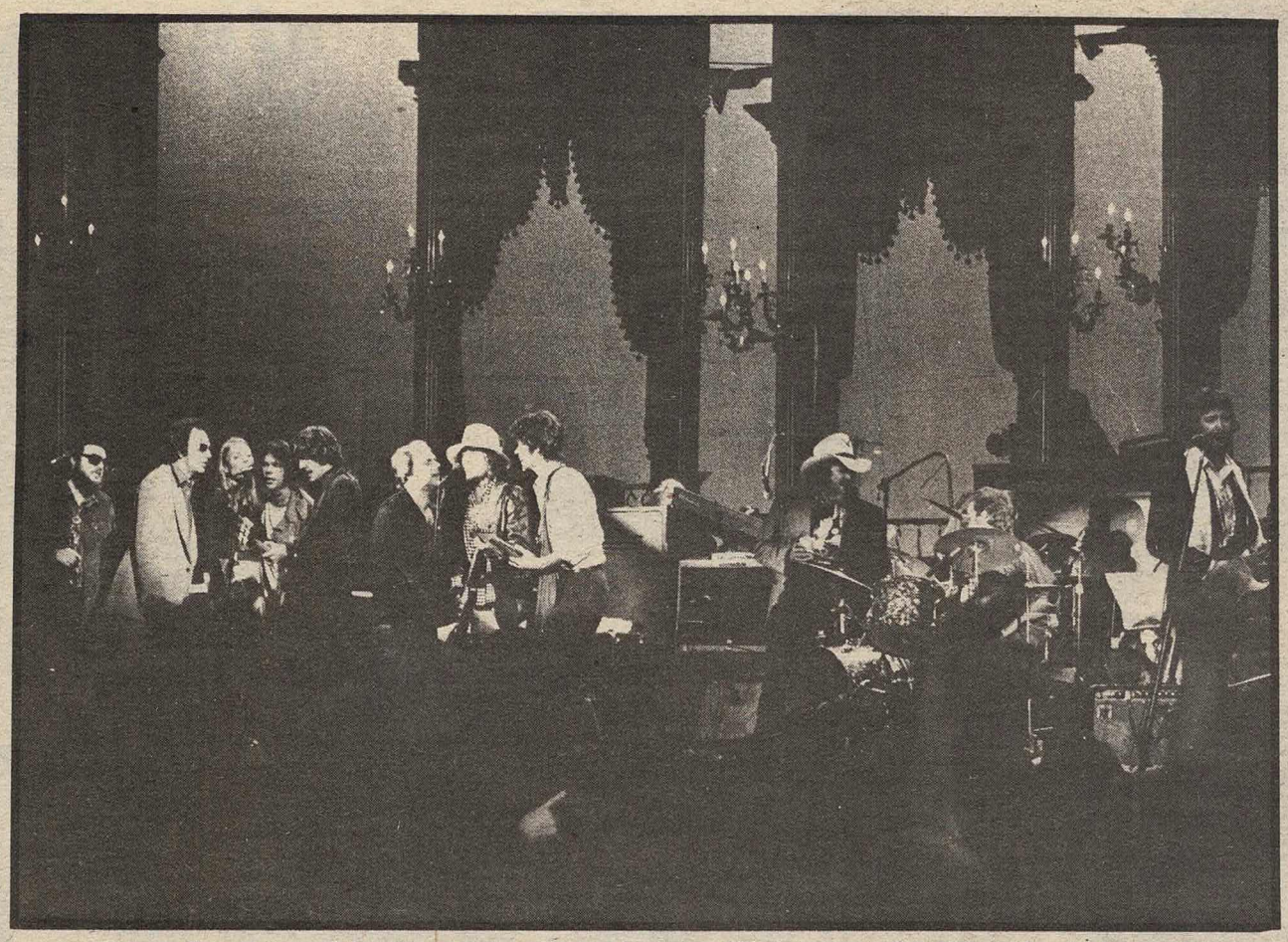
The Band chose Winterland, site of their stage-frightened debut six years and six months earlier, for their final show. They chose Thanksgiving for the date. Promoter Bill Graham surpassed himself with a production that was as surely his masterpiece as The Band's. The battle-scarred ice arena, which only four days earlier had been jammed with pot-smoking teens for the Blue Oyster Cult, was decked to the tits for the occasion. The cavernous hall was hung with silk banners and a dozen crystal chandeliers. A lavishly catered meal was served at candle-lit banquet tables, while a forty-piece orchestra played Strauss in the shadow of six Gothic-draperied archways — borrowed sets from the opera "La Traviata". The advertisements requested black-tie attire, and many complied. Even at $25 a ticket, Graham lost forty or fifty thousand dollars on the show. His press officer noted, "It doesn't matter; this was a labor of love."

The show was ready-made for posterity, and to insure that "The Last Waltz" would be saved for you, the entire concert was recorded and filmed. The Band called on Martin Scorsese (of *Alice* and *Taxi Driver* fame) to direct the film for $150,000. They brought in Laszlo Kovacs to do the cinematography. Six camera rigs covered the show. Before the first notes were played the concert was already an artefact *(Heaveeee! — Ed)*

The crowd of five thousand dined and danced from 5 to 8 p.m. Bill Graham was constantly on the case, clipboard in hand: checking the lines outside, taking a turn on the dance floor, helping to break down the tables, and finally announcing to the well-heeled multitude that "This could only happen in San Francisco."

AT 9.05 The Band plugged in and the spotlights came up with a roar

Much easier . . . Muddy Waters, David Bromberg, Paul Butterfield.



. . . lessee now. From left to right, please meet and greet Dr John, Neil Diamond, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Rick Danko, Van Morrison, Bob Dylan, Robbie Robertson, Garth Hudson, Ronnie Hawkins, Levan Helm, Eric Clapton (whewww).

THE BAND SAYS FAREWELL

from the crowd to the opening bars of "Cripple Creek" Moon-faced Garth Hudson looked like the puritan patriarch behind his immense organ. *(What? — Ed).* The unpredictable Richard Manuel looked promisingly at ease on the piano, while Rick Danko seemed like a sly J.D. in his Sunday-school best, surreptitiously fingering his bass. Robbie Robertson was fresh-faced and in control. Levon Helm sang lustily from his drum kit, looking like a wiry young prospector.

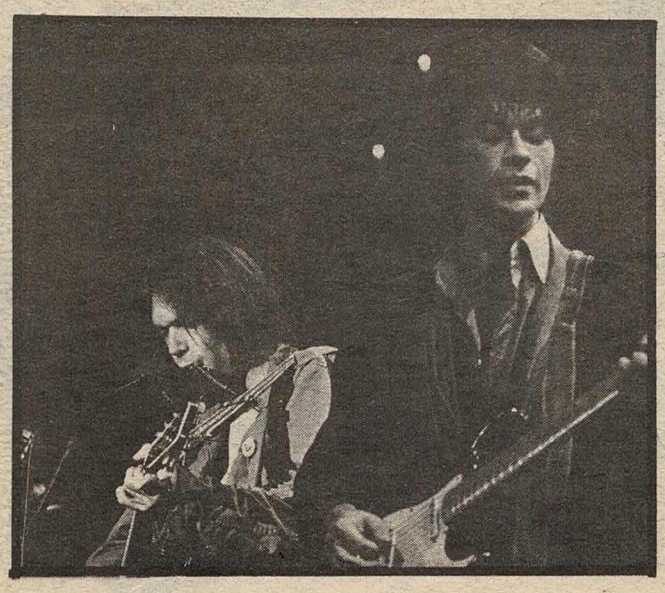
They moved with perhaps a bit too much professional skill through the opening numbers. Garth Hudson took beautiful sax breaks on "It Makes No Difference" and "W. S. Walcott Medecine Show". A nine-piece horn section filed in, dancing in place for "Life Is A Carnival". But it wasn't until their eighth number, "Ophelia", that everything gelled in a glorious Dixieland stomp.

A beautiful tuba solo introduced "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down", but the vocal lacked the anger and yearning that Levon has brought to it at his best. Rick Danko sang "Stage Fright" lucidly, but without the panic that infused the original. They capped the opening dozen from their catalogue with "Rag, Mama, Rag", again playing well but a bit warily.

The concert shifted gears as The Band became accompanists for an awesome parade of artists. It was both a unique tribute to one band, and a remarkable invocation of the many traditions that they embrace. The mammoth guest list allowed each artist only one or two numbers. Nevertheless, The Band brought to each an affectionate and inventive accompaniment — a stunning display of their versatility and virtuosity. The result was a bit tantalizing and frustrating: like trying to eat a magnificent banquet off a conveyor belt, or as one friend commented wryly, "like watching the *Ed Sullivan Show*." The brief collaborations were simply too exciting to happily relinquish.

"We started out sixteen years ago with a guy from Arkansas," Robertson announced. "We'd like to bring him out first." Ronnie Hawkins came on for a growling take of one of the two songs he admits to knowing, "Who Do You Love". As Robbie went into his solo, Hawkins clutched his heart and fanned the guitar with his black Stetson. Dr John came next, in a dark suit with red bow tie, shades and beret, for a gorgeous swagbacked gumbo version of "Such A Night". The Dr shifted to guitar, and Garth Hudson strapped on an accordion to join Bobby Charles (who wrote "See You Later, Alligator") on "Way Down South In New Orleans". Paul Butterfield joined in next, for a fierce version of Elvis Presley's "Mystery Train"

Robbie announced "Blues at its most maximum, Muddy Waters". The man sauntered out to a roar of applause, sporting a green Samsonite suit and quickly socked The Band, joined by David Bromberg, into a stunning take of "Caledonia". Muddy slammed out his vocal with humour and authority, clipping his lines against The Band's punches. Bromberg passed a tight solo over to Robertson, who walked it slowly up the neck, till Muddy waved his finger, sending Robbie into a blistering double-time. Next Muddy preached and danced through a version of "I'm a Man" that would make a corpse sit up and hiccup. It was one of the night's triumphs, a far cry from the flaccid renditions Muddy has offered on his own recent tours.



Even easier . . . Neil Young and Robbie Robertson.

Words: ADAM BLOCK

Pics: THOR ANDERSON

Next on came an elegant Eric Clapton, in a black velvet jacket, toting a matching black Fender. He did a lovely version of the country lament he co-authored with Rick Danko, "All Our Past Times". The folks hungry for some fancy fretwork from E.C. got a double dose with "Further On Up The Road"; as Robertson, in a series of exchanges, egged Eric into a show-stopping solo.

Neil Young followed, in a ratty Army surplus shirt, looking like a demented auto mechanic. The group did "Helpless", and then Neil shifted to acoustic guitar for an unfortunately cracked take of Sylvia Tyson's "Four Strong Winds".

The only woman of the evening, Joni Mitchell, swept out in a calico bedspread and black leotard. She opened with a subtle fluid version of "Coyote" and segued into "Darkness And Light", The Band providing a swimming samba back-beat and Robertson loosing sparse ruffling solos — in fine contrast to the arch abstract version on the record. Joni closed with "Furry Sings The Blues", accompanied by only Robertson on guitar, Manuel at the piano and Neil Young's harp flurries. Robertson introduced Neil Diamond, who looked like he'd just crawled out of the casino, pudgy and pallid, in his powder-blue suit and red-tinted glasses. Diamond stood by his promise to "sing only one song, but sing it good',, offering "Dry Your Eyes".

Manuel announced "Here's an Irish lullaby . . ." and ran through the first verse of "Tura Lara" before Van Morrison strode forth amply filling a sequinned cranberrry leisure suit with a lace-up crotch. He took the folk tune like a raunchy Ray Charles blues. Van hasn't been seen in these parts for nearly two years, and the audience roared at his appearance. He moved on to "Caravan", The Band grinning and driving him into a unique cancan, as he punctuated his final chorus with chin-high kicks — strutting off, cock-proud, as the crowd went bananas.

Robertson called back the Canadians, Neil and Joni, to join The Band on the hymnal to their homeland, "Arcadian Driftwood". Young looked like he hadn't a clue to the lyrics, and hunched dazed at the mike, humming, mumbling and ribbing Joni. The song is one of the group's most beautiful and ambitious, and The Band, all of whom except Levon Helm are born Canadians, gave a moving rendition.

AT MIDNIGHT The Band took a break and turned the stage over to a group seldom seen at rock concerts: the poets, in recognition of their shared tradition and common roots. Eight writers spoke, each briefly: Emmett Grogan (founder of the Haight-Ashbury Diggers), Sweet William (a crippled Hell's Angel), Michael McClure (poet, playwright and co-author of Janis Joplin's "Mercedes Benz"), Diane DePrima, Robert Duncan, Free-Wheeling Frank (of Hell's Angels fame), and Lawrence Ferlinghetti — a consummate showman who appeared looking like Toulouse Lautrec in bowler hat and blue Mao jacket, to read his parody of the Lord's Prayer: "For Thine is the Wigdom, and the Power and the Glory."

The music recommenced with a single spot on Garth Hudson, dwarfed behind multiple keyboards, like some mad sea captain at the helm, fashioning his stunning intro to "Chest Fever". The Band and the horns entered magnificently, conjuring all the spontaneity and fragility of their best work. They followed with a new tune written for the occasion titled "The Last Waltz", a slow zydeco saga with underwhelming impact. They recovered with "The Weight", rocking grandly against Danko's magnificent vocal.

Finally Robertson announced "One more very good friend . . . Bob Dylan." Dylan has always been very careful and canny in creating his own history. This night was no exception. Dylan chose to resurrect two numbers that he hasn't performed live since his death-courting tour with The Band a decade ago, and two others from their 1974 collaboration on "Planet Waves". When Dylan sang "Baby Let Me Follow You Down" in 1965, it was a desperate plea. "I'll buy you a velvet shirt if you just don't make me *hurts*," he had howled. Ten years later he bounded out in black leather jacket, a white Borsalino pulled down to the eyebrows, doing the same tune, but as a rambunctious, comical melodrama. At the end of each chorus he duck-walked away from the microphone like Groucho Marx. His connection with The Band was so fiercely joyous that Robertson fisted off a series of riffs that seemed to surprise even him. It was some of the most brilliant guitar work heard that or any night.

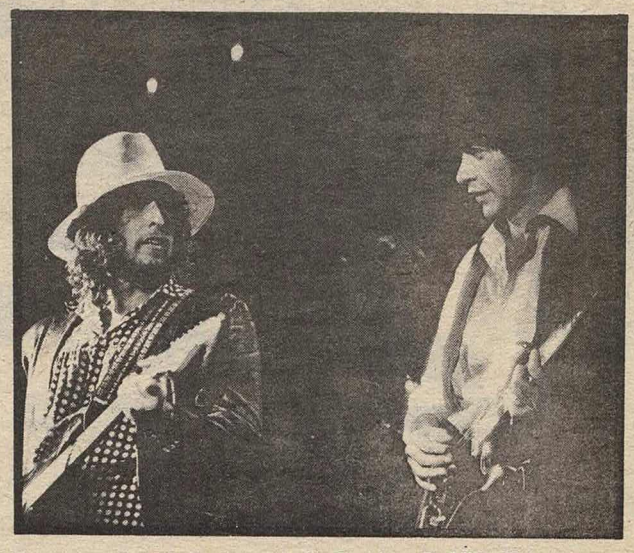
Dylan segued suddenly into "Hazel", taking it slow, crooning and shouting warmly. They followed with "I Don't Believe You", again from the '66 tour. Dylan transformed the earlier versions' arrogant panic into a near-cartoon or arch bluster.

Robbie fingered a series of smouldering little riffs that grew into "Forever Young", performed to a steady samba beat, Dylan singing with unimaginable richness and maturity. At the song's end, Rick Danko hit the bass line from "You Really Got Me", launching The Band into a grand reprise of "Baby Let Me Follow You Down", Robbie ripped through one gut-raking guitar line after another.

Robertson had scheduled an on-stage party to follow the show proper: a free-form jam session for unexpected encounters between the visiting guests. It was a fine gesture in the wake of the carefully-rehearsed show, but it never really got off the ground. The token Beatle, Ringo Starr, joined in tandem drumming with Levon Helm. Carl Radle took up bass, and Ronnie Wood, Eric Clapton and Robbie Robertson passed around brief sketches in the face of Paul Butterfield's energetic blues harping. Robertson and Clapton left, and Neil Young plugged in, trading riffs with Woody. Stephen Stills sauntered out, looking pasty-faced, overweight and ill-at-ease in a tweed coat, to a roar of applause. He plugged in behind Young and took a fast, careful solo. Young refused to acknowledge his presence, sidling over to Wood, the two rocking back and forth at one another, grinning like maniacs. After 25 minutes the jam ended. After a ten-minute ovation The Band returned for a friendly, free-wheeling night cap of "Don't Do It".

That was how the concert ended at 2 am for the weary, beaming crowd. But the real conclusion, the one that will undoubtedly close the film, came an hour earlier.

The impact of the concert wasn't in the pomp and setting or even in the array of stars, but in The Band's ambition to salute and embody the notion of a musical community of artists with a common touchstone and heritage. That faith in the ever present shared vision was both an affirmation of their past and a promise of freedom up ahead. The dream was embodied in the tune The Band chose for their finale. After Dylan's set, the whole troupe assembled. Dr John and Neil Diamond stood arm in arm. Van Morrison, Robbie Robertson and Bob Dylan clustered around a main mike, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, and Rick Danko leaned towards another, Ringo joined Levon Helm, and Ronnie Hawkins, Ron Wood shouldered Paul Butterfield and Eric Clapton. Perhaps the most remarkable musical cast ever to share a single stage sang together: *"They say every man can be replaced / They say every distance is not near / So I remember every face / Of every man who put me here. / I see my life come shining / From the West down to the East / Any day now / Any day now / I shall be released."*



Easier still Bob Dylan, Rick Danko, Robbie Whassizname.

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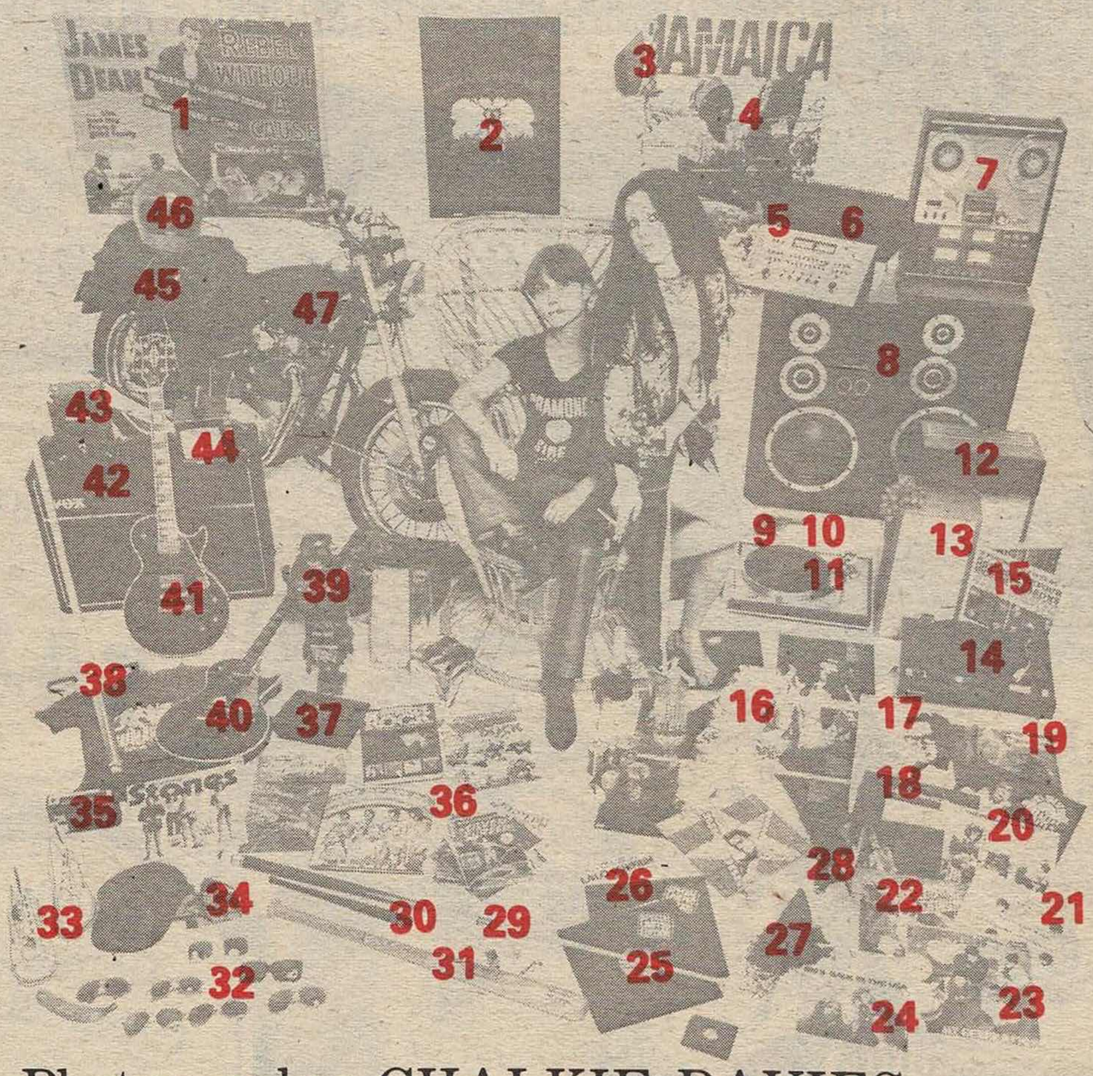
The Models: the lovely Gilda (you should be so lucky!); Inflatable rubber replica of Max Bell, only one owner, bids please. Remember, the real thing is only half-a-pint of bitter on a bad night!



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JAZZ

by Brian Case

DEXTER DIGS IN

I STOOD at the gate of Terminal 2, Heathrow, and checked the envelope of duplicate documents, permits and promises that might be necessary to collect the cargo that was freighting in from Copenhagen. Of course, my cargo had been issued with all this crap months before, but being a partying-type package, could well have forgotten to bring it along, had been known to blow in decked out from hip to breast pocket with overlooked hotel door-keys, each weighted with a ball and chain.

The cargo was needed to play tenor at the Camden Jazz Festival.

The cargo was Dexter Gordon.

In the event, Dex remembered everything. At a towering six foot five, he waded hip-deep in tourists, white trench coat, pale blue rollneck jumper, pigskin bag and axe case enfolded in his giant mitts.

Somehow, I crammed him into the van. He weighs the same as Ali, bears a strong facial resemblance to the young Joe Louis and, contrary to what they say about boxers, Dex did come back.

Long tall Dexter is THE Bebop tenor. Born L.A., 1923, son of a doctor who had both the Duke and Lionel Hampton on the panel, Dexter built his chops in the big bands, blowing alongside Illinois Jacquet in the Hampton band from 1940-43, cuttin' and chasin' on numbers like "Po'k Chops", which is probably where the idea of the two-tenor chase all began . . .

"I was talking with Illinois recently," I told my squashed passenger. "He said he remembered you WELL."

Dexter's laugh is a huge, loutish, meat-eating guffaw. Several nodding Alsatian mascots in Mini windows made *Exorcist* pans. "I have seen the lions of Longleat" stripped clean off a passing Morris.

"HUR HUR HUR. Jacquet. Yeah." Whatever Illinois had on Dexter was not yet inert, or to do with library fines.

We rapped about that extrovert little stormer. Had he been an influence? Had he really sounded like Bird on alto?

"Somebody asked me that a few years ago. I'd never really thought about it, but now that I have, I'd say yeah. When he first came to Los Angeles from Texas, he was playing the alto and very good, but he was more or less on what he's on now. A tenor-like style on alto."

I peered past the squishing windscreen wipers at the red tail-lights ahead. Wet mother of a night to welcome one of the sunniest players in jazz history, some tickertape . . .

"Lester Young was your main man, right?" Dexter had been called Vice-Pres prior to Paul Quinchette, was, in fact, the first man to come up with a synthesis of Lester, Coleman Hawkins and Bird. "What was it that grabbed you?"

"EVERYTHING! HUR HUR HUR." Dexter sure was a slowpoke, horizontal answerer. He tapped out a Tareton, took all the time in the world lighting it.

"WHEN HE CAME in, Lester gave us just another picture, you know. He painted just completely different. I was captivated. Everything he played was very lyrical, very melodic. He never tried — ummm — to play flowery. That type. He wasn't concerned with that.

"It seemed to me everything he was playing was always in the story line, trying to say something — whereas almost all the other tenor players were in the other tradition, like Hawkins or Chu Berry. Umm — telling a story too, in their way, but it had to do with a lotta pyrotechnics or whatever, which is great. I'm more into that now than I useta be."

"Why's that?"

"It's the times," drawled Dexter. "Times have changed. But basically, my thing is still telling the story. It's all connected, I think. I hope! HUR HUR."

"You mean like knowing the words of the song when you play it!" The giant tenorman sometimes introduces a number by speaking the lyric, often jollying along the sentiment with textual alteration: "Days of Wine & Roses" becomes "Days of Vin Rose", you dig.

"Yeah right. Well, that was the thing about Lester that I thought about mentioning but I didn't. Even the things where there were no lyrics too — still tellin' that story all the time. In fact, all his solos, the cats useta stand on the corner at the candy store or round the jukebox and sing with them. Like Jon Hendricks and King Pleasure, see — they useta do it to my things too."

"How did you dig playing in Louis Armstrong's band?" This had been one unimaginable gig in the discographies, Bebop Dexter, fat pants with the bluff cuffs and solid sender, horizontal white streaks bleached in his goatee, holding down the tenor chair for Pops.

"Uh — yeah. It was OK. After Hampton, I went back to Los Angeles and — yeah — gigged for about a year, then one night Louis came into a joint I was working in and said, 'Say son, that's a nice tone ya got.' HUR HUR HUR. You know. So the next night his road manager came in, Teddy McRae who also was a tenor player, and he asked me if I'd like to join the band. I said OK because the main thing was to get a chance to work with Louis.

"Actually, at that time, I hadn't heard the band, you know. But none of his big bands have ever been anything special. He was always just Louis, you know."

"Did you learn anything?"

"I ummm — yeah — umm — I must've." He didn't sound convinced. "Well, it was only a short time, about seven, eight months. We did a coupla Hollywood films — one was *'Atlantic City'* and one was called *'Pillar To Post'* — B-type films. Lotta broadcasting, because Louis was always very popular. Coca Cola useta have a national show once a week that featured all the bands — Dorseys, Ella, Louis Armstrong, Guy Lombardo — they had a variety, all the big name bands."

Which brought the track record up to the blazing Billy Eckstine band, starring what Dexter referred to as "a lotta individualised individuals", like Dizzy, Sonny Stitt, Gene Ammons, Leo Parker, John Jackson: "Really WOW! you know. That was the thing — I went from Louis Armstrong's band directly to Eckstine. Really a fantastic change! I'd heard the band on one record that Eckstine had done and so I knew a little bit, but the first few nights I was in there it was really a shock! There's Art Blakey and he's droppin' bombs — Dizzy . . .

"Fats Navarro came in after Dizzy left. Sweet, beautiful, very nice cat. Came from Key West Florida, and he had a sound in his trumpet, like a Cuban influence. Key West is very close to Cuba, and I think his father was a Cuban. He had that flavour to his tone, toreador, bullfighter thing. Big fat sound, very conscientious player.

"It was a very homogeneous band. At that time everybody was very young — I think maybe Dizzy was the oldest guy in the band, 25, 26. There wasn't hardly anybody over 30. I was about 21."

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EMI

Six foot five of hellraising tenorman hits town. Dexter Gordon, bebop daddy, elbows the bottle and raps about the high times and panics of the '40s revolution, slammers, dramatics and dubious cheques . . .

JAZZ STARS 15
THE CHASE AND THE STEEPLE CHASE
WARDELL GRAY DEXTER GORDON
at The Pasadena Civic Auditorium
Gene NORMAN'S Just Jazz Concert
2 Feb. 1952
Additional selections Paul QUINICHETTE and his orchestra
MCA RECORDS

TEMPESTUOUS YOUTH is how Dexter pegs this period, two-tenor chases with Gene "Jug" Ammons on "Blowin' The Blues Away", the start of the heroin habit with Dexter hauling out his axe on the corner of III Street and Fifth Avenue to blow a solo for his connection. The panics and the highs . . .

Was it true, that about the masters playing beat-up, funky old horns? Art Blakey had told me Bird's horn was held together with elastic bands and sellotape.

"No, man," said Dexter. "Buhaina talks all that shit, right? HUR HUR HUR. Well, of course, he started out like that, I mean — who could afford a new Selmer when he's a kid? I went through a coupla horns, a Martin, that kind. I was lucky I gotta Conn, which at that time was one of the best horns. I've seen cats playing those kinda horns. When I first met Gene Ammons, he had a Pan-American which is a student-type horn, but as soon as possible he effected a strategic change-over. HUR HUR."

"Couldn't you get them free from the companies? Paiste give away a lotta cymbals."

"It's a funny thing. They still do that with drums, but they don't do that with instruments."

We pulled in at the kerb outside Dexter's hotel. "Come up to my room, my man," said Dex. "I've given up drinking, but I've got a bottle of vodka in my bag."

I watched him write his John Hancock in the register. From the tight faces behind the desk it was clear nobody was clocking the honour. Dexter's Minor Mad, Dexter Rides Again, Long Tall Dexter, Dexter Digs In, Dexter's Cuttin' Out — all the old Savoy handles floated through my wig as the pen slowly scrawled across the page.

He fumbled the key in the lock. "Nearly broke my fuckin' foot. HUR HUR HUR," he roared as he bent to retrieve it from somewhere round his gigantic, positive, double-thickness, if-ya-got-it-flaunt-it Texas leather brogues.

I POURED MYSELF a generous shot of vodka, offered Dexter a roll-up. "Strong tobacco," I told him, "but these days it's full of twigs."

"You into twigs? HUR HUR HUR HUR!"

"How did Wardell Gray die?" I asked him. Wardell of the drape jackets, the thin man with the driving tenor, Dexter's partner on the classic "The Chase" and "The Steeplechase", "Move" and "Rocks 'n'Shoals", the two of them blowing his Angelinos into bad health in clubs like Jack's Basket, Brown Bomber, Papa Lovejoys, The Last Word.

"Yeah — umm — it was some kinda accidental death in Las Vegas. What really happened was he had an overdose, so Teddy Hale the dancer and someone else took him outa the hotel because they were all gettin' high together and so forth. Anyway . . . so they got scared and they drove him out into the desert to make things cool for themselves. In the process, moving him, somehow his neck had got broken."

"How was it you two got together on the chase?"

"Tenor chases? That was part of the scene then, you know. The jam session thing, the cutting sessions. It was a normal evolvement. Always in the sessions in Los Angeles they useta jam all night and every night, but it'd always wind up with me and Wardell. So that's how Ross Russell got the idea of recording us with 'The Chase' thing."

L.A. in the '40s was one jumpin' town, Central Avenue the West Coast's 52nd Street. Bird's visit in 1945 set the seal on emergent Bebop. It hadn't been too much in Dexter's youth.

"Before the war, late '30s, there was very little, so when the big bands came to town it was an occasion. California was isolated from the rest of the country — 3000 miles from New York, 2000 from Chicago, say 1500 from Kansas City. It was a jump. But I got a chance to hear Duke, Basie and Lunceford."

THE FIFTIES found Long Tall Dexter in the slammer. He was in Chino, the famous prison-without-bars, when a film unit moved in to shoot *Unchained* starring ex-footballer star Crazylegs Hirsch, and Al Hibbler singing the famous "*Oh, my love, my darlin', I've hungered for your touch*" title track. And Dexter's tenor playing sequence was dubbed by someone else — HUR HUR HUR, says Dex.

Strangely enough, it was acting that boosted his comeback. In 1960, he acted in, wrote music for, and performed Jack Gelber's *The Connection*. The play is about a group of cats waiting on The Man, killing time which is different time to theatre time.

"Yeah, it was fun. Every week we got paid by cheque and the heading was The Hollywood Connection Company. HUR HUR HUR. Everybody say WHAT? Cats in the bank say WHAT IS THIS SHIT? Whose gonna cash this fuckin' cheque, you know? HUR HUR HUR. But it was OK. It helped a lot."

Next came the great series of Blue Note albums, and it was like Dexter had never been away. The biggest sound around, a relentless flat-footed loping swing that drives at the mind like incantation. Dexter Gordon seems to straddle sessions like an enforcer, bellowing out his loutish quotes, doubling the tempo without shedding an ounce of weight, alternately lifting and stamping his great feet in some underwater, slow-motion time of his own. Like the brogues, Dexter is built to last.

"Tell me about the session with Bud Powell, 'Our Man in Paris'."

"We rehearsed for a coupla days," said Dexter, watching me sink his vodka, "and I'd written some tunes, but Bud Powell couldn't put it together any more. It was nothing really complicated. Actually, I wanted to cancel the date. I remember Bud saying, 'Hey Daddy, I can't play this shit, man — I'm a Bebop piano player.' He was gone then, you know. So, anyway, umm — Frank Woolf said, 'Sad rehearsals, you have a good date'."

On parole from L.A. to cut the albums in The Apple, he was still refused a cabaret card. In 1962 he cut his losses and emigrated to Europe, settling in Copenhagen. In his time, Dexter has influenced a raft of tenors: Gene Ammons, Allen Eager, Stan Getz. Coltrane's scream came from Dex, Rollins' sardonic twist.

"Influence?" said The Legend. "Way I see that's like money in the bank! HUR HUR HUR."

And when he walked onstage holding his axe out in dedication to the faithful at the Camden Jazz Festival, the house went wild. DEX! GO MAN! DEXTER! Everybody love the big cargo. Soy Califa!

Selected Discography:
The Foremost! *(Polydor Select 2344050)*
The Chase *(Spotlite 130)*
Dex-Fats-Maggie-Bags-Moody *(Spotlite 133)*
Dexter Blows Hot And Cool *(Dootone AUL 207)* **Dexter Rides Again** *(Savoy MG 12130)*
Jazz Concert — West Coast *(Savoy MG 12012)*
Wardell Gray . . . Central Avenue *(PR240062)*
Doin' Allright *(Blue Note BLP 4077)*
Dexter Calling *(Blue Note BLP 4083)*
Go *(Blue Note 4112)*
A Swingin' Affair *(Blue Note 4133)*
Our Man In Paris *(Blue Note 4146)*
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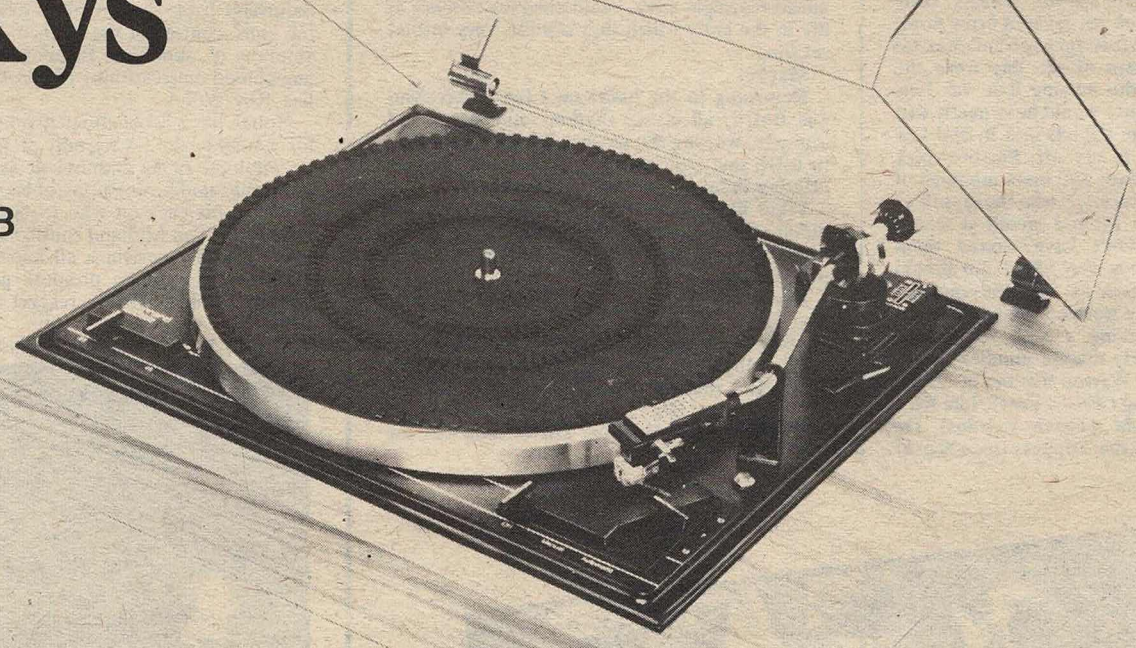

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Endlessly combing the barren industrial wastelands of the UK, NME goes in search of the Rock and Roll Soul of Albion.

This week: PHIL McNEILL goes boozing down the coast and reports on:

The 26 Sons of Sarfend.

WARREN LAKIN is standing by the door watching people pay their quids. No he's not, he's guiding the eighth band of the day through the crowd with their gear.

And now he's standing on the edge of the stage hustling the previous group to get their equipment off. And now he's having a word with the DJ, telling him how long before the next lot start. And now he's back on the stage, and he's giving the signal . . . and the eighth band are playing, only ten minutes behind schedule.

Warren Lakin is standing by the door helping the ninth band to ferry their equipment in . . .

Warren Lakin works for a local Southend newspaper. He's short, old-fashioned short-haired, bespectacled, wiry, and very tired. Lakin was the bright spark who originally suggested to the Southend Action Group for the Arts (SAGA), back in July, that the crowning event of their eighteen-events-in-nine-weeks festival should be a rock'n'roll experience. Surprisingly, he doesn't seem to be regretting it.

SAGA was formed a year ago to campaign for a local arts centre and to promote events. When they decided on the Ballroom Blitz idea their first step was to place one ad in a local paper; within 48 hours 25 bands had replied, offering their services free. Within a fortnight the ranks had swollen to forty bands, and SAGA decided to stage two consecutive Sundays of homegrown rock at the Queens Hotel in Westcliff (the only regular smalltime venue in the area): two twelve-hour sessions, midday to midnight, with thirteen bands on each show.

Despite throwing up the Feelgoods, Kursaals and Hot Rods in the past couple of years, South East Essex is, by all accounts, a pretty hostile environment for a rock band. Indeed, the Big Three's success may be explainable as sink-or-swim: make it in London or zilch out.

"The Wednesday sessions at the Queens Hotel revived rock here among local bands," Warren tells me. "That and the Double Six in Basildon are the only places to play this side of London."

I suspect that there has never been a time when getting a band together was easy, but now more than ever the only way to find work is to create it yourself.

SAGA have shown there's work to be found in Southend. On their first gig they attracted 500 to see a roster of groups who played for minor expenses only — profits to underwrite the other festival events, which ironically included a show by the famous Henry Cow, and to the SAGA fund — so maybe that will encourage a bit of private enterprise.

Now if you were paying attention last week you'll know that the *New Musical Express* already delved into the seaside shuffle. Tony 'Tonsilitis' Parsons took his fevered brow down to the Queens Hotel a fortnight ago and filed his report last week. Stars of the day were the Mickey Jupp Band; the missing link was Lew Lewis, whose appearance would have neatly tied both the Rods and the 'Goods into it, had Lee and Sparko not had to cry off; Parsons' pick were Gypsy Rock Squad; and main moaners of the day were Eye Society, who have subsequently lectured both TP and myself at length about how he shouldn't have named them Fourth Channel like they were billed, nor should he have described them as "less interesting" when, they claim, they stormed the auditorium. Maybe Tony was taking a leak when they finished their one thirty-minute number . . .

So it's Week Two. Warren fills me in on the bands I've missed: Slug ('Frisco/Free), Idle Rich (Bad Company), Strahl (eclectic weirdos), De Larssi (pop), Ego and the Trippers (teen aggro) and Cowboy, featuring Kursaal Flyers steel pedaller Vic Collins (C&W). Apologies to all for the journalistic short-hand of categorisation . . .

Montana even Warren Lakin contrived to miss, so we come in on a mainstream rock quartet called Panacea, very young, good copyist instrumentalists and bad vocalists. Local band heartland, and my freezing heart is hardly lifted. Did I come forty frosty miles for this?

But what do you expect, thirteen Wilkes and Graeme Douglases?

The main lesson of the day is soon apparent: contrary to legend, Southend is emphatically *not* a hotbed of R&B. It's a normal town that just possibly breeds *more* music than most (when I was at school there we had kids in five different groups in a class of less than forty) but which breeds as varied a spectrum as anywhere in the country.

The next quartet, Blokes, take the stage in donkey jackets with their name stamped across the back, WIMPEY style, and position themselves in the spaces left by their clutter of roadworks warning lights. A good incarnation of Ye Olde Wishbone Ash Thinge gradually becomes more alluring as they show off some clever song ideas — computer dating, for instance.

Guitarist Tony Search reveals they were originally formed on an EMI-contracted songwriting duo — Search and co-guitarist John Wicks — and their roots seem to lie in straight pop. His comment on Southend's R&B image, which seems, amazingly, to surprise him:

"If Eddie and the Hot Rods are the national image of Southend, God help us. I saw them here last year with the Mickey Jupp Band and thought they were amateurs."

HGV follow Blokes, a monolithic quintet with a great visual: one guy self-effacing, dark-suited, short-haired, glasses, a bank clerk while the other four look like wild men from the hills, shaggy hair, park bench overcoats . . . and the audience loves 'em. The music is trad HM.

I split for the bar with Warren, meet Martin Squirrel and Richard Freeman from the Wharf Rats. They've added a lady singer alongside Freeman, defying image considerations, Valda Lewis.

Graeme Douglas moseys over to get his band's names down. Along with fellow Kursaal Flyer Ritchie Bull, Barry Martin and Andy Farrell from Cowboy, and Phil Aldridge, he's topping tonight as Eddie and the Blizzards. Much to my chagrin, because he's a brilliant guitarist with a lot of imagination, I'll have to be catching my train by the time they start.

Strange thing is, they're all sitting here, corpuscular at the heart of a scene most outside musicians might envy, bemoaning the absence of life in the body which they are this very instant reviving.

Maybe.

Returning to the ballroom I find Hieronymous Bosch, all clever rhythms and attennated aruiness, wowing the patrons. There's only time to catch one typically idiosyncratic Wharf Rats offering before zooming for the train.

What little music I saw was pretty good but didn't astound me; and there was scarcely a hint of Chuck Berry and nothing resembling a safety pin in sight.

But I'll be back next year, hopefully able to stay longer — and I'll bet by then there'll be another local lad made good to set alongside Mickey Jupp, Dr Feelgood, the Kursaal Flyers, Eddie and the Hot Rods and Lew Lewis. The Wharf Rats, HGV, Cowboy, Gypsy Rock Squad, the Mad Shadow, Dune: look out for 'em.

Curtis Bruce.

"WHO'S BEEN on there tonight?" my young taxi driver asked as we pulled away from the Railway.

"Magnum, eh? Well," jerking his head back and swivelling his mouth sideways the way taxi drivers all do when they're about to make a proclamation, "Magnum's singer has the best projection in the business."

Kid me not, I mean that's going pretty far. "Well, *I* really rate them," he says. Try giving a cabbie any lip and you get taken into town by way of Tokyo, so I keep my trap shut. But even a seen-it-all-before smart-ass "critic" has to concede Magnum do have a good vocalist.

Magnum are the Thursday band at the Railway pub, off the beaten track in Curzon Street, about three miles from Birmingham's city centre. Since Albert Hern gave Steve Gibbons a weekly gig there about four years ago, the Railway has become the foremost love music pub in the city, with bands seven nights a week. The bands. almost always local, hold down an unlimited weekly residency for as long as they go down well and want to stay.

Tom Hoban, who manages the Railway now, follows the fair and sensible local practice established by the Gibbons Band when they reopened the live music scene in Birmingham. The licensee provides the room and counts the increased bar business as his profit. The bands promote their own appearances — usually with a three pound ad in the Birmingham *Evening Mail* and a reliance on word-of-mouth — and get whatever they can take at the door. Admission to the Railway is usually 35p, 40p on a Friday.

Unlike the proprietors of many London venues, Hoban and his counterparts in the city's live music pubs are glad to give the bands a place to play in return for the crowds they draw. "To be honest, without the music I doubt the bar would pay," he states. He thinks about 80 per cent of his customers each night follow the particular band on, and the other 20 per cent are regulars who come three or more nights a week.

Current Railway residences run from funk on Mondays from Rainmaker to heavy metal on Saturdays from Resurrection. Friday nights see big jams, centred at the moment on Spitfire, all veterans of numerous Birmingham bands, but augmented onoccasionby old pros from the area like Roy Wood.

Hoban has a list of about 40 other bands eager for a weekly slot. A friendly middle-aged man, he admits to being enthusiastic about the bands but rather undiscriminating in his rock tastes, so he takes his cues on who to book from other musicians. The Midland music scene is a tight-knit one; the musicians all know each other's work and appear to promote generously the efforts of colleagues they respect as well as their own.

"I tend to go on what the musicians tell me. For instance, I was a bit worried by Rainmaker at first because we had a funky band before and they just didn't go at all. But musicians say they are very good, and they *are* going down very well."

Magnum pulled an audience of about 90 people on the dank Thursday I saw them, a lively, responsive audience, comfortably filling the small, rectangular saloon bar that jams up with as many as 200 on a Friday. A five-piece incorporating synthesiser, they make full use of the vocalist's strengths in ambitious harmonic arrangements reminiscent of Queen fantasies.

Young, and derivative, they have a long way to go in the melodic heavy metal stakes. But they do show potential with their naively attractive, poetic songs like "The Prince of Dreams" and "Master Of Disguise," and have already done quite a bit of recording in Birmingham's Nest sudio.

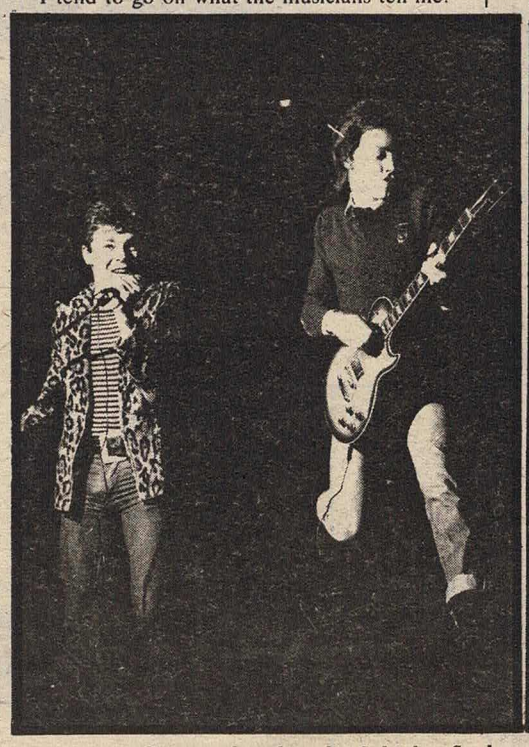
A FEW MILES away, across from the Digbeth Coach Station, the Barrel Organ pub also offers music every night. Monday is the regular rock and roll night for closet teds from as far away as Wolverhampton and Coventry, while the other six nights are filled by rock residencies.

The manageress is a cheery, fresh-faced, mumsy lady named Mary Moody, who's turned into a right little raver since she took over the pub and band bookings two years ago. Mary, too, relies firmly on local groups: "I *love* Hooker. Bess are very good, too, and Little Acre are fabulous. We's need 14 nights in a week to get the good ones in."

The Barrel Organ, however, has also been a stopping off point for a few Liverpool bands en route to London, most notably Supercharge. Mary still busts up remembering the night their hefty Kojak lookalike, Albie Donnelly, crashed through the stage floor in one of his exuberant routines.

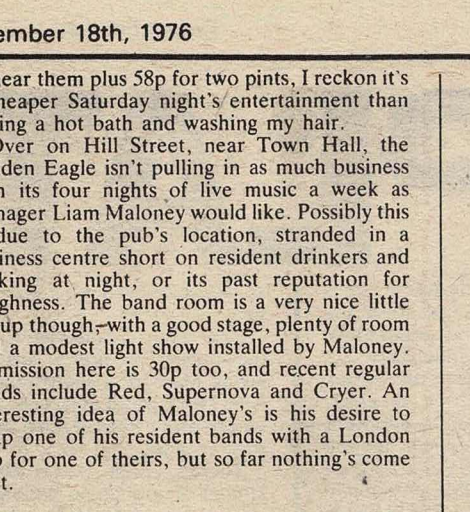
Admission is usually 30p for the band, with about 160 people on a Friday considered a very full house (and the last time Gibbons played there, 300 piled in). That means a band can earn about £30-£50 on a good night, enough to keep going as they build a following. Mary says "I think if you let them run the door themselves they work harder." She styles a few of the older regulars who have objected to the bands "fuddy-duddies" and isn't bothered by them. "I couldn't do the business here if I didn't have the rock. And I think the kids are smashing, they're so mannerly."

Present resident bands include Hooker on Thursdays and Bess on Saturdays. I didn't get to see Hooker, who bombed out on *New Faces* a while back, but they are widely considered real comers in Birmingham, with a reputedly hot guitarist in Mark Bristow and an interesting singer-songwriter in James Langston. Bess are a promising, hard rocking boogie band of competent musicians who incorporate some stylish Airplane-like harmonies, furthered by an attractive girl singer with an intense voice. At only 30p



Brums' own, ahem, punk rock outfit, Suburban Studs.

Hookers' James Langston.



BRUM ROCK PART TWO

By ANGIE ERRIGO

to hear them plus 58p for two pints, I reckon it's a cheaper Saturday night's entertainment than having a hot bath and washing my hair.

Over on Hill Street, near Town Hall, the Golden Eagle isn't pulling in as much business with its four nights of live music a week as manager Liam Maloney would like. Possibly this is due to the pub's location, stranded in a business centre short on resident drinkers and parking at night, or its past reputation for roughness. The band room is a very nice little set-up though, with a good stage, plenty of room and a modest light show installed by Maloney. Admission here is 30p too, and recent regular bands include Red, Supernova and Cryer. An interesting idea of Maloney's is his desire to swap one of his resident bands with a London pub for one of theirs, but so far nothing's come of it.

'PUB-WISE THOSE are the three biggies, but plenty of other places get in on the action one of two nights a week: both the Hare and Hounds and the Fighting Cocks in the Moseley area, with its high student population, and the Perry Bar Crown and Cushion among them. A new Saturday night venue called the Waterside Rock Club has opened recently just out of town, in Hopwood. And the Birmingham Arts Lab — the last of its 60's species in the country, and the only art movie house in Brum — has spawned rock projects, such as Big Girl's Blouse.

Of course there are the numerous venues for name bands: the Odeon, the Town Hall, Aston University, Birmingham Polytechnic and sometimes the attractive Birmingham Repertory Theatre. While the legendary Mothers is long defunct, and the one-time haunt of Traffic is now the Shoop Disco (*the* disco in town), both Barbarella's and Rebecca's with three and two nights a week respectively for rock, sustain a constant stream of bands.

It is on the way to Barbarella's from the Railway that my taxi driver, Keith, is waxing authoritatively on local bands. Who needs politicians, news readers, sports commentators or rock journalists when you can ask any taxi driver? Keith spends most of the trip telling me how excellent Little Acre are — "I'm surprised nobody's snapped them up" — which is a coincidence because they're on at Barbarella's. He's so pleased to hear it he parks the cab and comes in too.

Little Acre are definitely hot. After the Gibbons Band and City Boy (Steve Broughton's inventive troupe, reviewed in last week's *NME*), both huge in Birmingham, Little Acre are most obvious as the outstanding band due for wider recognition and ready for serious recording.

An imaginative, spirited and versatile 10-piece, Little Acre has been described as "the party that never ended." Experienced performers from the environs of Dudley and Wolverhampton, they got together to play for a fairly riotious anniversary celebration for JB's club in Dudley. They got off on it so much they've been working determinedly ever since.

Five of the guys — singer Johnny Higgs, guitarist John Evans, drummer Johnny West, sax player George Northall and bassist Jim Hickman — came together from highly diverse backgrounds (Northall was in the Jean Luc Ponty orchestra and Evans had backed R and B acts like Inez and Charlie Foxx) to form a soul band called State Express. After a long spell of working on the Continent they returned home and hooked up with the others, most of them similarly seasoned and familiar faces at JB's.

(This co-op rock club, by the way, took its name from Little Acre vocalist Johnny Bryant when it started as a small group of friends meeting weekly to play records in the Dudley football club's social hall. Within two years it was a four night a week scene with bands and a 10p admission. Now located in a former warehouse and spruced up to a state of comfortable raunchiness, JB's is a co-operative venture in booking name bands the regulars want to see, free on Mondays and Tuesdays for drinking and dancing, with an admission of about 50-60p for bands at weekends).

Johnny Bryant sang with Salty Dog and Thunderbox before joining Little Acre, guitarist Elmer O'Shea played in Bonehead and Bronco, and John Ogden was a singer until living in Morocco transformed him into a conga player who gigged with Wolverhampton's heavy rockers Trapeze for two years.

Little Acre's two ladies are the only members without earlier professional grounding. Laura Spencer, doll-like and always glamorously well-groomed, was found singing with Trapeze at a party. Glenis Jones, pretty and funky, used to do a turn at JB's.

Barbarella's is a beehive of red-lit chambers where local musicians hang out, disco aficianados bump in the dark and dolled-up couples pour in from all over the Midlands for a big night out. It's a good gig for Little Acre, who get £100 here for playing to fans. This is in contrast to the £15 gigs they have taken in London, where exposure is vital.

Their set, all good, original material save for the ebullient if mandatory encore rock outs of "Get Back," "Oh Carol" and "Little Queenie," is a tight and dynamic celebration of funk rock with strong elements of blues, soul, jazz and straightahead boogie. To use the most encompassing cliche, it's just goodtime music that makes your feet move and your drink taste better.

The four singers are deployed for maximum variety and effect, from Laura's silkie smooth strutting through "He's Been Bad To Me" to Glenis's tough, bluesier wailing in "Sad Song." Best of all is "Leavin' " with the full ensemble steaming around bassist Hickman's raunchy lead vocal. And with two genuine lead guitars the effect is exhilarating in the instrumental breaks of a number like "Summer '73." Evans is eminently classy, firing off singing runs in the upper register to O'Shea's rich, heavier licks. All great stuff.

So with so much going for them you'd think it would be fairly easy for Little Acre to break. But their financial situation is an example of what any provincial band has to put up with if they want to build a following and attract attention in London. Most of the group have jobs; some have wives and children to support.

While they can play several nights a week at home for pretty good money, it doesn't take a calculator to see that £15 and even £40 gigs in London for a 10-piece band scarcely pays for transport. In America a band can make it in almost any big city, but Birmingham's dearth of good recording studios, media and record company people is rather surprising for such a major centre.

Little Acre's personal manger Roy Williams says they learned from Steve Gibbons' example that provincial success can be used to subsidise forays into London. "You need to be able to survive financially outside of London before you can manage to get down there. We're working here quite happily, but we want to get further, so we have to go down there."

As Glenis points out, it's only because they've made sacrifices to step up London appearances (at the Nashville, the Hope and Anchor, the Red Cow, the Rock Garden and Dingwall's) that they've started to earn supporters and interest from record companies. "If you only go up there once in two months you might have a really good night, but when you go up again they've forgotten you. We've got to keep going there and doing the London circuit regularly to get that really hard core."

Little Acre will make it. But in the meantime I picture them whooping it up in their van on the way to London, Jim passing out sandwiches he's bagged from his sister's wedding reception and ribbing Laura about her latest job demonstrating toys.

Elmer, a shameless liar, spins one of his glib fables about his Irish and Indian relatives while chomping on a raw onion, to everyone else's disgust. "Our real problem at the moment," he says, "is that we have religious differences in the band. George is a Hindu and Jim is Church of Buddha. No, seriously, what we definitely want now is a good deal."

Johnny Bryant recoils from the onoin fumes and says, "Yeah. A good deal of what?"

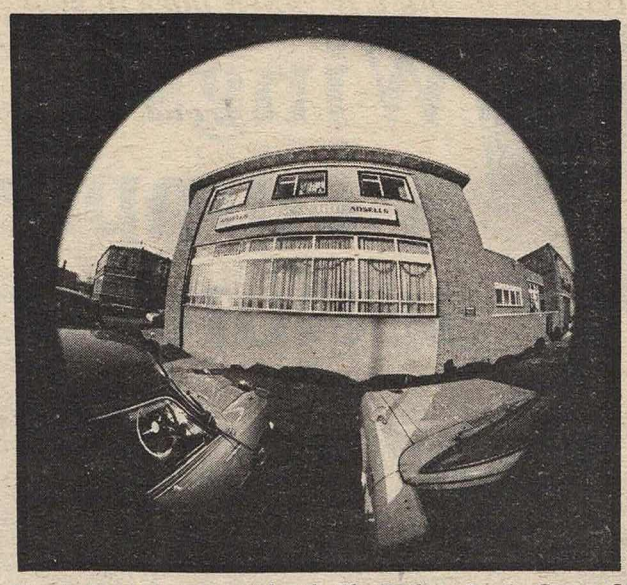
I wish I could have stayed up longer to hear some of the other bands I heard a lot about: Hooker; Slender Loris, who have put out a lightly funky single called "I'm Only Heavy When You Put Me Down" on Nottingham's Revere Records label, which is selling quite nicely in the area; Bandy Legs, recording for Jet Records, and Bright Eyes, a country, folk rock band.

BIRMINGHAM'S sole bid for punk rock glory is Suburban Studs, who have a growing young following all to themselves in the area.

Their manager panics at the mention of the word punk, since they're finding promoters are running scared at the sight of anything under 21 playing what he describes as "young, *now* music." Still, they bagged the support slot with the Runaways recently and are locally reputed to have an indefinable *something*, so we're bound to hear more from them.

Admittedly I have only been able to scratch the surface of a busy and fascinating music scene in the Midlands. There's obviously plenty of untapped talent around, so the message is that rock is alive and very well up the M1. Check it out.

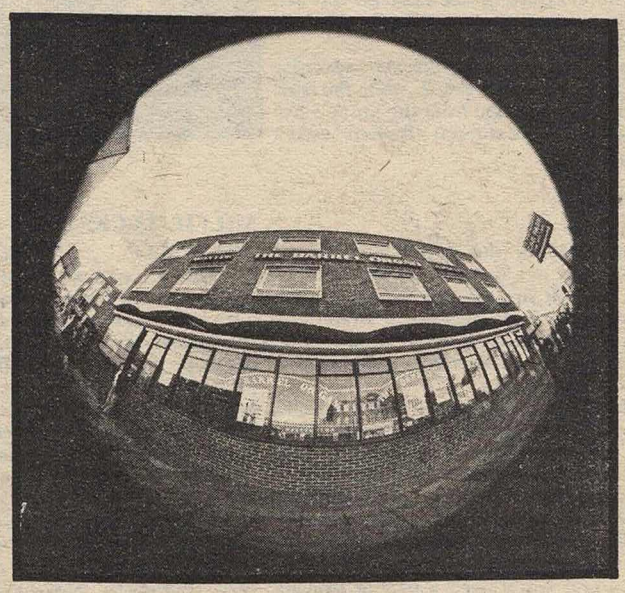
Next week: um, Torquay?



Birmingham's premiere rock pub, The Railway Inn in Curzon Street.

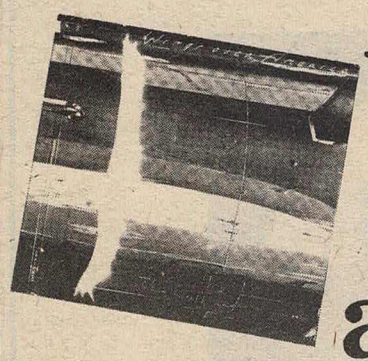
Bright Lights Big City. Little Acre's Laura Spencer and Glennis Jones.

Pics: ALAN JOHNSON



The Barrel Organ, Digbeth.

PLAT



Wings— a complete action replay

WINGS
Wings Over America(EMI)
THE WISDOM of releasing a live *triple* album set is questionable, and it's a move which could be easily construed as gross indulgence on behalf of Wings.

After all, the entire repertoire is old material, but more importantly, since you're not actually viewing the band in question, the concert recording has to have a particularly special quality to sustain the interest of the listener for the best part of two hours, through 29 songs.

This package, as the title suggests, consists of tapes made in the States on the Wings world tour earlier this year, and basically it's the same act which the band then brought to Wembley's Empire Pool in October.

Those concerts, you may recall, received adverse notices from my fellow journalists.

You read them and digested. Blinded by the kiddiwinks's adulation Macca wanted to remain their Pop Idol, and as a result knackered himself artistically.

Reviews said he had nothing at all to do with rock 'n' roll and he was the harmless Superstar Stooge whom parents would approve of and pat affectionately on the head as if he was a toothless old dog.

Actually, I remember a Wembley gig as one of the best concerts I'd ever seen in my life; musically exciting and visually spectacular. And it was the memory of that event which encouraged me to review this set.

But really, three albums is going over the top, because by the fifth side no amount of instrumental virtuosity can justify the inclusion of songs like Denny Laine's "Time To Hide" and Macca's own "Beware My Love", which frankly are lame ducks.

Then again McCartney, who produced the collection, obviously wanted to present the show from beginning to end, goofs and all, and chose not to have a *recorded highlights* set.

Although the entire repertoire of their set might be represented song for song it apparently isn't the usual show from beginning to end, however.

The recording quality is maintained to an excellent standard by careful editing, but a lot of the atmosphere is missing because the audience applause is mixed down. Also a few on-stage raps between performed and audience have been .

Perhaps these are trite observations, but personally if I want to hear songs that are performed with such perfection I'd get myself the original studio version. Otherwise it's merely an exercise of noting the subtlest change in these readings.

However, most of the music presented here illustrates admirably that McCartney and Wings are in fact a world class performing band.

As the first side shows they're not a collection of pop clowns who play strawberry mouse music and cover for the lack of musical dexterity of guvnor's missus.

No, with "Venus And Mars/Rock Show", and "Jet", they emerge as more than a little mean, occasional vicious, but collectively a powerful rock ensemble. Joe English has clout as a drummer, cracks uppercut snare strokes and stubbornly donkey-kicks bass patterns into the listeners belly.

McCartney, although he may not now have the same prowess and imagination as he did, on bass, say, ten years ago, is a good companion to English's style.

And Jimmy McCulloch and Denny Laine on guitars ravage the numbers with fierce chords and, when they are offered the opportunity, blues-orientated solos that are torn and shredded round the edges.

It's the kind of rock 'n' roll excitement you'd expect at a concert, and again it's re-established to conclude the set on side six with "Hi Hi Hi" and "Soily".

What's particularly remarkable about this package is that until the end of side four, which is at least two thirds of a *typical set*, they have excellent consistency and approach each number with vitality.

"Maybe I'm Amazed", "Lady Madonna" and particularly "The Long And Winding Road" find Macca remarkably inspired, and they're each readings that compare well with the magnificent originals.

And it's only on the third side, their acoustic interlude, where they allow the playing to become casually ragged (except on "Yesterday", which if it wasn't for the imposing brass section, would almost be perfect.)

Seldom does the brass work as an effective contribution to the numbers, though, other than to increase the power of attack, which really shouldn't be necessary with a five-piece electric outfit. Perhaps the only significant embellishments the horns make are on "Let 'Em In", and "Live And Let Die".

There's little doubt that these three albums are an excellent *and* exciting testimonial for the musicians, who prove that even without the elaborate visuals of a stage performance they can still pull off an entertaining musical event.

For me, Macca shows that he can give credibility to what is essentially pop music in much the same way that he did with the Beatles and inject it with a such refreshing energy that yet another generation can find it acceptable.

His lyrics, as typified by "My Love" and a host of his other '70s songs may be bland and inconsequential in comparison with his former works, but he still has an astute melodic sense.

Above all though, he and Wings ain't too jaded to rock 'n' roll.

Tony Stewart

QUEEN
A Day At The Races (EMI)
FUNNY REALLY.

The office outside has been a-buzzing of late with the latest report concerning the whole punk conspiracy — the to-ings, and fro-ings, of the Sex Pistols' current situation versus the general British Public and their phoney morality — suddenly everyone feeling as if something at last is going to happen, that the frazzled rock hierarchy might just be toppled and me in here — the reviewing room that is — listening to an album that the Great British Public will in a matter of days be clutching cherishingly to the old communal breast, an album that is destined to go gold-platinum — what's the limit — an album that is so vacuously effete, such a grotesque parody of all the musical forms it relentlessly preens over, that listening to it throughout this entire day has left me totally depressed.

I hate this album. Adamantly so. If it wasn't going to be so obviously gargantuan. I would merely despise it, finding most of its contents daring to ply this sort of grand ultra-narcissistic self-indulgence.

Maybe a large portion of my hostility goes back to childhood and my parents who were undying worshippers at the shrine of Gilbert and Sullivan and their horrible pickaninny witty operatics, *The Mikado* being the proverbial cat's whiskers.

Almost everything bearing the composing moniker of one F. Mercury on this record seems to drip with that some cutesy-pie mirror preening essence of ultra-preciousness.

All these songs with their *precious* pseudo-classical piano obligato bearings, their *precious* impotent Valentino kitsch mouthings on romance, their spotlight on a vocalist so giddily enamoured with his own *precious* image — they literally make my flesh creep.

Yeah, and of course I loathed "Bohemian Rhapsody" too, but nothing here courtesy of Mercury's guilded quill even provides the . . . uh . . . attempted expansive drama of the latter.

Instead, it's all languorous posturings, all *"Look into my eyes and you'll see/I'm the only one . . . You can reduce me to tears/With a single sigh"*.

"Camp" just isn't the word when Mercury with his cohorts around cooing and trilling with those sterile precise harmonies of theirs, sings *"Bring on the charge of the love brigade/There is spring in the air"* Uuggh!

The single "Somebody To Love" is a relatively mild example of this, by the way. And, ye-eah, it's awfully artfully well-produced, and is pumped out with a certain gusto. In the context of some of what else is present here, in fact, it's all pretty acceptable.

The rest though is grotesquery of the first order.

At this point it should be noted the not inconsiderable output of Mercury's composing rival Brian May is a deal more palatable than Fred's own — though, as you must have by now, gathered, I wouldn't conceive of that particular task as being too testing an operation.

"Tie Your Mother Down", the opener is pretty feisty, giving Mercury a sharp break from kitsch which in fact allows him to prove himself not a bad rock vocalist.

There's even some Ian Hunter enunciations and the song — a straightahead rocker with dim-wit '70's "Don' mess wid me" lyrics — almost reminds me of how much I was forced to admit "Now I'm Here" was great, against all prior-constructed prejudices.

"Long Away", another May Tune, is fairly decent folk-rock — a jingle jangling guitar nod of the plectrum to The Byrds and a pleasant "pop" melody, even if May's classic strangled Ostrich guitar tone (which he uses for all solos performed in the upper register of the fret-board) doesn't add anything.

The *piece de resistance* though is hilarious. Called "White Man", it's an absurdly ham-brained attack on . . . well you guessed it, our fair-skinned predecessors' predilection for carnage and rip-off is against Ethnic Folks of other inscrutable tints.

'Ere but, wait a sec, Bri, that riff — I've heard that before somewheres. Led Zeppelin's "When The Levee Breaks", to be exact, which Jimmy Page took from (and co-credited to) one Memphis Minnie, a wonderful black person.

Roll 'dem bones, boys — white man sings with forked tongue.

Well, that's it. I'd mention the two other contributions (one by bassist John Deacon: facile, over-cute, over-cooked and another by drummer Taylor: not a bad effort actually. Soft strumming: decent lyrics) but oh I see, I just have.

Nick Kent

RECENT SOUL COMPILATIONS Cliff White

WAR:
Greatest Hits (Island)
A FULL price, chronological package of 10 tracks, all but one of them American hit singles. The earliest, "All Day Music" (1971), and the latest, "Summer" (1976), are similar lazy, hazy moods of summer romance, promised during languid afternoons in the park and fulfilled in sensual evenings on the beach. Between the dreamy scenes rather more incisive thought and vigorous moods are explored, although even when the group are most joyful ("Why Can't We Be Friends") or most sombre ("Slippin' Into Darkness", "The World Is A Ghetto") they are hardly heavy, in any sense of the word.

Their rhythms are mainly Latin-American, their vocals a mixture of soul harmony and west coast rock, their instrumental solos vary from tortured harmonica to complex percussion and keyboard work. The whole makes them one of the most original black groups of the 70's. But not always the most enjoyable — some of their album tracks tend to be a bit directionless or self-indulgent.

Happily there is little evidence of the fault on this set, especially as some of the tracks that were originally very long have had to be edited to fit the package.

N.B. The cover and inner sleeve correctly advertise "Southern Part Of Texas" as track 2, side 2, while the label claims that it's "Ballero", a hit single from the group's live album. Fortunately the sleeves are correct; "Ballero" wasn't a particularly inspiring track.

THE FATBACK BAND:
The Best Of. . . (Spring)
ALTHOUGH they're based at the opposite corner of America The Fatbacks were not so musically far removed from War at the time of their first sizeable hit, "Keep On Steppin" (1974). Much more basic perhaps, a street-funk band no less, but they had character, loads of virile energy, and the strutted their stuff over rhythms from a comparable source as War.

This full price, 11-track selection admirably demonstrates how quickly they degenerated into an anonymous disco soundtrack (thereby gaining British admiration). With success came compromise — or perhaps it was progress (if so it was straight up a blind alley). Fans of their early work will be pleased to boogie to such as "Yum Yum (Gimme Some)" & "Wicki Wacky"; others are more extravagantly catered for with recent material like "Spanish Hustle" & "Part Time". Whichever you are, you'll need a pair of dancing brogues to fully appreciate this one.

MILLIE JACKSON:
The Best Of. . . (Spring)
IN DIRECT contrast to the above, let it be noted that you need a broken heart, a brain below the belt, a soul full of nitty gritty and/or a funked-up love life to get next to this. It's not only recommended, it's positively urged on you. 11 tracks on this full price offering, and worth every penny. From the exquisitely tormented "Child Of God" (1971) to her high powered but sensual come-hither, "There You Are" (1976), Mz Jackson has proved herself to be *the* major female talent of the 70's as far as I'm concerned.

Although Millie has been making concept albums in isolation, particularly her version of Tom Jans/Dobie Gray's "Loving Arms", Bobby Goldsboro's "Summer (The First Time)", and Luther Ingram's smash "If Loving You Is Wrong" — all of which she makes her own property by these very recordings. Newcomers might be bemused by the doctor summoning nurses as Millie falls apart at the climax of "I Still Love You", an event that does sound bizarre out of context (but then it's not to be taken seriously on the album either); elsewhere it's saner stuff like the dance hit "My Man, A Sweet Man" and her original version of "It Hurts So Good". Certainly does.

THE FOUR TOPS:
Smash Hits (Tamla-Motown)
BACK IN the '60's it wasn't deemed necessary to waste anywhere from six to 11 minutes on a recording when the job could be just as effectively knocked off in three, and so you now get 17 tracks for your money on this abbreviated anthology of the Tops. Presumably because it wasn't a British hit their classic "Baby I Need Your Loving" has been omitted in favour of later material of inferior quality, but that's about the only questionable decision on an otherwise faultless bargain.

From "I Can't Help Myself" (1965) to "Simple Game" (1971) The Tops were as consistently successful as any of the other Motown stalwarts — and, with The Supremes, probably the most popular in Britain — and it seems likely that many of the tracks will be hits again in years to come. Buy now, save later.

GEORGE McCRAE:
The Best Of. . . (Jay Boy)
AT THE LESS expansive end of the scale you only get 10 tracks from the steamy depths of Miami, and not all of them hits either — but then it's only a mid-price compilation so no complaints. While it might be argued that "Rock Your Baby", "It's Been So Long", "Honey I" and similar hardly display an adventurous change of direction between hits, neither are they quite so cynicallly computerized as has been suggested, and more to the point, they all sound good. Having avoided McCrae's previous albums (album?) I'm very happy with this little bag of sun-soaked soul. I guess you'd be too.

K.C. AND THE SUNSHINE BAND:
The Best Of. . . (Jay Boy)
GO BACK one review and start again. Same comments, but substitute "Sound Your Funky Horn", "Get Down Tonight", "Queen Of Clubs" and similar in place of Mc Crae's titles. KC and his crew have been one of the most successful disco-cum-funk outfits of all and while I'd argue that their success has been out of all proportion to their talent I wouldn't knock it. Don't think about it, just dance, dance, dance.

THE DOOBIE BROTHERS
The Best Of The Doobies (Warner Bros)
IN STRICTLY non-aesthetic terms you can't quibble with this album's release.

Not only have the Doobies been around long enough to justify a "Best Of", they've also had considerable chart success in their native America; each one of these ten cuts has been a hit single Stateside, however small.

And listening to these hit singles side by side on an album you're aware of the Doobies' commerciality, something not apparent on a *bona fide* Doobies' album of new material where their prospective singles are scattered throughout an entire elpee.

Moreover, hearing their hits one after another, one can understand why they were successful in the first place, in that they're prime meat for American radio, and expertly produced by Warners staff producer Ted Templeman, doubtless with this consideration in mind.

What's more, several of their hits are very good rock records — well-conceived compositions with infectious hooks that are well played, particularly Tom Johnston's trimvirate "China Grove", "Long Train Runnin' " and "Listen To The Music", their only British hit.

Whether it was because of the success of these records or not, Johnston continued writ-

TERS

ing on similar lines, only what had once been a good idea ended up as just drivel on tracks like "Without You", "Rockin' Down The Highway" and their arrangement of the Tamla classic "Take Me In Your Arms".

As things turned out, fate stepped in.

Johnson got sick and, come the time to record their most recent studio album "Takin' It To The Streets", he'd been replaced as the group's major composer by former Steely Dan keyboard man Mike McDonald, the writer of the title track, another fine commercial rock record, although one which lacked the immediacy of Johnston's earlier songs.

In between all this you get two Doobies' ballads courtesy of Pat Simmonds — "Black Water", a song about the Mississippi which has a neat acapella ending, and "South City Midnight Lady".

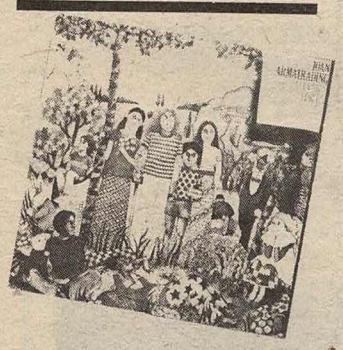
Both are a mite over-produced but not without melodic invention.

And there's also their over-blown version of "Jesus Is Just Alright", which doesn't stand up in comparison with The Byrds' more subtle arrangement.

Ultimately I can't recommend this album, since only a handful of cuts which can be considered quality rock music.

Nevertheless, this collection is selling like hot cookies in the States — like most other Doobie Brothers records, in fact.

Steve Clarke



JOAN ARMATRADING
Whatever's For Us (Cube)

OVER THE past few months the Great British Public has taken Joan Armatrading under its wing and given her a taste of the acclaim which long-time admirers argue should have been hers years ago.

Gratifying as current popularity is, however, the reactivation of her four-year-old album "Whatever's For Us" makes it plain why mass recognition did not come Joan's way earlier on.

The contrast between the surging sensuality of her recent work and the primness of the 1972 release couldn't be more pronounced.

From the children's book illustration which adorns the sleeve to the Sunday-school imagery of Pam Nestor's adolescent lyrics, this is a distinctly immature stab at recording, and is also curiously Caucasian. (The copulatory rhythm of "Love And Affection" would have seemed as out of place in these surroundings as an orgy in a monastery.)

Back at the start of her career Joan was being touted as a female counterpart to Elton John, and the connection was stressed by the involvement of several E. J. collaborators (producer Gus Dudgeon, band members Davy Johnstone and Ray Cooper) in the making of this record.

What really strengthened the comparison, though, was the piano-based nature of Joan's composing technique, and the greatest stylistic advance she has made since is to switch to acoustic guitar as her primary writing instrument.

The effect on her songwriting has been to liberate it from the straitjacket of her limited keyboard style and enable it to venture in the slipstream of "Astral Weeks". (A nice touch of irony which nobody seems to have spotted is the deliberate resemblance between the strummed guitar introduction to the opening track of "Joan Armatrading" and the first few bars of "Into The Mystic".

Knowing what we know now about Armatrading's ability to stretch herself vocally and develop the full spread of her talent, listening to this trial effort can be exasperating, as you wait in vain for the lady to find her feet and stamp her personality on the music.

Joan's great handicap in the early days was a lack of confidence in herself and her abilities, which caused her too lean too much on those around her.

She has grown up fast in the space of a few years and outdistanced almost all comparable performers on the contemporary scene, leaving behind this hesitant preparatory work in the process.

Jeff Morgan

Peter Asher productions proudly present . . .

Linda Ronstadt, pictured recently on stage at the New Victoria, with Andrew Gold, arguably one of the main-springs of her success, in the background.

LINDA RONSTADT
Greatest Hits
(Asylum):/
JAMES TAYLOR
Greatest Hits
(Warner Bros)

NINE TIMES out of ten the "Greatest Hits" name tag contravenes the Trade Descriptions Act, but in the case of these two albums it's just plain ridiculous. Ronstadt's greatest hits are her American ones; but while she has never had a hit in this country, at least Taylor has managed a couple.

Playing this game by the marketing department's rules, though, and accepting ruefully that any artiste's "greatest hits" are any 10 or 12 numbers commonly associated with the name, both these albums represent a good summary of what each singer has done to get his or her name in lights.

The Ronstadt retrospective, in particular, seems like a shrewd piece of record company thinking. On this side of the Atlantic, it forms a useful story-so-far of a recording history which is still probably a closed book to a large part of an audience, newly-interested after her recent successful tour here.

Cynics have been heard to mutter that Ronstadt's take-off has had more to do with a set of highly photogenic features and a hyper-energetic publicist than with musical skill or originality.

Partly true. The Ronstadt voice is not the exquisite instrument owned and operated by Joni Mitchell; it is better suited (as Linda herself tells reporters) to harmony and back-up than to solo singing. Her pitch is perfect, but her phrasing monotonous and her delivery tends to linger at the same level of intensity throughout a song.

To call her a "superb interpretive artist" (the standard P.R. schtick) is to ignore the hash she made of Mike Nesmith's finely-balanced "Different Drum" (the unusual structure of which requires delicate handling) and the perfunctory run-through she gave to "Desperado" (now one of her most requested stage numbers).

But the true secret ingredient in her success is not her good looks or clever management (though these things have helped), it's the boundless professionalism of the studio band which went through its paces alongside her during the recent tour and kept the show from collapsing through a surfeit of candyfloss.

Ms. Ronstadt's known preference for ballads with non-fattening centres is counterbalanced, on stage and on vinyl, by the coiled-spring energy supplied by stalwarts Andrew Gold and Kenny Edwards along with new man Waddy Wachtel.

The high points of this varied and representative compilation are the up-tempo barnstormers, "Heatwave", "When Will I Be Loved?", and above all "That'll Be The Day" which, with a few bars of guitar interplay between Gold and Wachtel, succeeds in obliterating your memory of the original take. No mean praise.

AND SO to James Taylor's greatest hits. If it wasn't for the fact that it sends me to sleep, I'd call it an eye-opener.

Were we really so dumb at the tail end of those fabulous '60s to be taken in by this sentimental eyewash?

Taylor made his name by stepping into the light at the correct psychological moment in America's post-Vietnam depression and portraying himself as a damaged casualty of society.

Whatever his actual maladjustment (he was a state registered mental patient for a time) his songs never conveyed more than a diluted sense of melancholy and he was quite incapable of drawing the listener into his private anguish in the way that Dylan, Neil Young, Jackson Browne and Paul Simon (the later only haphazardly) succeed in doing.

The intriguing thing about hearing Taylor's early standards alongside his later, less highly-rated material is that no discernable drop in quality is apparent — the new songs, in fact, have more satisfying arrangements and comport themselves in a more sprightly fashion than their better known companion pieces.

The only remotely invigorating item contained in the package is his 1975 revival of the Tamla classic "How Sweet It Is", which showcases a mellow tenor solo from the admirable David Sandborn.

Otherwise it's unremitting boredom all the way. With brand new re-readings of "Something In The Way She Moves" and "Carolina In My Mind" (both from his now deleted Apple Album, presumably unavailable in their original form due to contractural reasons) leading the field in tedium.

Jeff Morgan

JOHN RENBOURN
The Hermit
(Transatlantic)

WHAT, DOTH the holy men declaim from the mountain top?

No, it's just another collection of acoustic guitar tunes from John Renbourn. The main problem being that it's no better and certainly no worse than what came before.

There's even an element of the disappointingly predictable about it all.

Which isn't to deny "The Hermit" its appeal.

If you play some sort of unaccompanied guitar yourself then you'll find ample opportunity for study in Renbourn's experiments with slightly unorthodox tunings in "Goat Island", harmonic progressions in the title tune and pseudo-Tudor mimickry in "The Princess And The Puddings".

And if you're not that way inclined — well, "The Hermit" makes for unobtrusive and acquiescent listening.

Suffice to say there's some characteristically studious playing from Renbourn. All the same I prefer the non-original pieces he interprets with real tenderness.

His versions of three tunes — two stately, one spritely — by the blind (and long dead) Irish harpist O'Carolan are nicely circumspect, as is his handling of "A Toye", which dates from 1603 and was written for lute.

Renbourn's own contributions are no way as convincing; his obvious facility seems to get the better of him. His precise (punctillious?) techniques is all very well, but at the expense of the warmth in say "Faro's Rag", straightforward picking without any pretensions.

Maybe I'm overstating the case, but on the couple of occasions Renbourn duets with other guitarists there's not a whiff of mannerism detectable in his playing.

"Caroline's Tune", written by and performed with Dominique Trepeau, is medieval in feel, yet buoyant and uncluttered, faded all too soon.

Of course Renbourn's good. But somehow that isn't enough. To my mind this sort of mostly solo guitar music makes more and better sense coming from a player like John Fahey who scores so strongly with the intense, often feverish mysticism that's present in much of this work.

Still, Renbourn's next release will apparently feature him in a more adventurous setting. All considered, that seems like a wise move for the ex-Pentangler to make.

Angus MacKinnon

FREE
Free And Easy,
Rough And Ready
(Island)

WELL, IT HAD to happen sooner or later, but wouldn't it have been better if Island had recycled a few classic Free tracks as part of a tribute to Paul Kossoff?

Until now, there's been just the one Free compilation available in Britain: the limited edition "The Free Story".

"Free and Easy, Rough and Ready" (lame title) is ten Free cuts taken from each of their albums with the exception of the inferior "Free At Last" and the marvellous live record, "Free Live".

Actually, Island have made something of a factual error here. No Free compilation would be worth its salt without a version of their live *coup de grace*, "The Hunter". According to the not extensive sleeve information, the recording contained here is from "Free Live". Play the track and you'll find it's the studio track from Free's debut album, "Tons Of Sobs".

Free, let it now be said, didn't make too many bad tracks, particularly during their formative period, so there's no excuse for compiling an album which fails to hit your consistently straight between the eyes.

This compilation, however, is merely all right.

It certainly would have been better if it had included more material from their first two albums, "Tons Of Sobs" and "Free".

As it is, there's "Walk In My Shadow" from the first album, one of the great debut albums of our time, as well as "The Hunter".

On that first album, Free can be heard at their rawest and arguably their most vital. "Walk In My Shadow" is a fine little riff song, featuring classic Kossoff, playing those howling lead embellishments against his incessant chording.

Here you have a set of teenagers playing music that not only has energy, but features great musicianship and a good song to boot.

In their way, Free took blues and R & B and gave it a new interpretation, as cuts like "Walk In My Shadow", "The Hunter", "Woman", and "Wishing Well" prove.

In their more restrained moments they could write a fine plaintive, low-key number too, like "Bodie", included here from the inconsistent "Highway" album, which is also the source the album's only weak cut "On My Way".

If you're not hip to Free, but want to be, don't buy this. Rather get your hands on a copy of "The Free Story" or buy any one of their first three albums, or their swan song, "Heartbreaker".

This doesn't do justice to a great British rock band.

Steve Clarke

DAVE SWARBRICK
Swarbrick (Transatlantic)

IN WHICH Dave Swarbrick, fiddler to Fairport, comes across as pretty much the compleat traditionalist.

Nary a clump of the old turf or peat's left uncut as he bows, plucks, probably puffs through a wide-ranging assortment of Irish, English and Scottish material.

It's all hallowed ground though, where electricity still fears to tread.

Francis James Child would have loved this; there's not a stroke of the reverb pedalling with which Swarbrick's been entertaining Fairport fans for some while now — and no vocals either, which is fine by me as Swarbrick's decidely acerbic singing is a taste I haven't managed to acquire.

Sounds uninteresting, does it?

Not so, mainly because Swarbrick plays fiddle, viola and mandolin like a man possessed. There's this tough, intransigent vitality about his whole approach.

"Swarbrick" itself serves up some 15 selections in slightly haphazard fashion; Swarbrick's own mercurial presence lends it all cohesion. Old friends and associates appear around and about; there are almost as many different line-ups as tunes.

Simon Nicol (guitar), Dave Pegg (bass) and Bruce Rowland (percussion and lucid production) play individually and/or collectively. Kate Graham's second fiddle and Beryl Marriott's piano help fling the ceilidhs on their dizzy ways. Savourna Stevenson's ringing Irish harp accompanies Swarbrick's fiddle on two slow airs, whilst Martin Carthy's tautly rhythmic guitar graces four tunes in duet with Swarbrick, who takes a further two by himself.

"Swarbrick" is by turns lively, melancholy, intoxicating, haunting and more besides.

Jigs, reels, laments, dances or whatever, it's always heartfelt.

It'll probably please the purists whilst puzzling or even deterring those who prefer a little amplified gristle with their trad. music.

But if you're after a usefully general introduction to the multifarious aspects of our fogbound islands' folk heritage than this, as they say, is the one to hear.

Angus MacKinnon

On the border? They go straight down the middle

THE EAGLES
Hotel California
(Asylum)

THE DILEMMA was evident, as I see it, from the days back in 1972 when The Eagles' first outing, the single "Take It Easy" was allowed a slight quotient of airplay on British Radio.

An American smash, the number at first seemed thoroughly thrilling.

A lot of talk was going down then, you may recall, about real "good old rock 'n' roll" and what with Chuck Berry at last receiving his justly canonization that year, here was a song that picked up on the Master's wry rolling lyrical panache, adding a neat Kerouac open roads restless spirit twister to shoot the song through with a "classic" feel.

The song, indeed, was *that* good — it could have been the *great* single — like "Do You Believe In Magic", "Brown Sugar" you call the shots — but something was, at first, inexplicably lacking.

It turned out to be the band themselves. There they were, tuned into a monstrously fine piece of witty restlessness, and they were cruising in second when they should have been digging hard into a four-wheel-drive.

It should have sounded dirty, but it was clean, translated via a spirit about as frenzied as the Brylcreem bounce.

Actually, (and this shouldn't be construed as the insult most will take it to be), it sounded like a good Monkees single — "Last Train To Clarksville" comes to mind.

The first album was O.K. — nothing on it matches "Take It Easy" — but it had promise and was drilled through and through with A.M. accessibility.

The second, "Desperado", was the attempted grand slam — a quasi-conceptualised magnum opus which equated the contemporary model hard-core rock 'n' roller with all the Billy the Kids, Jesse James, Amarillo killer-dillers of yore.

However it only succeeded in putting the question — how can a band of true rock desperadoes slapping nine on Edge City — the whole out on the border, out of control — keep their main musical booty so adamantly cloistered right down that dad-blasted middle of the road.

"On The Border" was a smart pot-pourri of material — a whole lot of "oooos" a few good melodies, more desperado posing, more sensitive "the star winked down on the prairies" lovey-dovey wanderlust.

It placed the band firmly in the "Major American Band" sweepstakes as the new L.A. breed.

C,S,N & Y weren't making out? These boys would deputize.

With "On The Border" The Eagles stroked in as *the* numero uno classic respectable American band.

By the middle of the '70s they'd outstripped 'em all just by keeping-on in there. The Crosby aggregate, the once regal ramble-tamble of Fogerty's Creedence, even sons of the Endless Highway, the Allman Bros. Band, were lost — or losing it.

The Eagles had bridged the great divide — A.M./F.M. — even if the album they'd hit the bullseye with, "On The Border", was their worst to date, mainly due to guitarist Bernie Leadon's penchant for dour L.A. mysticism and "I wish you peace" drivel.

Yep, "Oooos for the bucks!" I didn't say that by the way, Glenn Frey did (jokingly, mark you). Talking of quotes, it was Neil Young (who should know) who called The Eagles "The group who most sum up the city of L.A. . . . the true inheritors of Buffalo Springfield, in that respect."

Well, of course it had to happen. What we have with this new album see, is a concept work of sorts — not unlike "Desperado" in that respect — The Eagles casing the myths and all-purpose seedy opulence of their chosen watering-hole, the cankerous precincts of Los Angeles.

They call it Hotel California, but it's really only L.A. that's being studied here.

You don't even have to open the damn package to realise that Bernie Leadon's hand had to be thrown in for this particular card-game to continue proliferating.

I mean, now they don't have to use those sanctimoniously mystical Navajho Indian medicine symbol paintings that ol' Bern probably has covering the walls of his Zuma beach mansion for the cover.

This latest effort could have been done by Hipgnosis, it's so slick (it isn't by the way; John Kosh and drummer Don Henley take credit). An opulent palace is captured bathed in yer preverbial exotic midnight gloom with the title etched in neon.

Inside the gategold, the lobby is filled with transient beings — nothing really surrealistic beyond the solitary midget bell-boy — the faces lack distinction. Only the centrepieces, the five Eagles themselves, stand out courtesy of a spotlight and a dour communal countenance. Concept works about your home turf are serious business, after all.

I picked up this "concept" thing via a second-hand regurgitation of a Nicky Horne programme on Capital radio recently, when he had interviewed the band, who apparently had gone into some detail about the intent of just about each and every track featured here.

The first, for example, the title track itself, is supposed to purvey the impression of the youthful dreamer/migrant who's just arrived after mile upon mile of intrepid journeying through a Hunter S. Thompson hallucination of a desert on the threshold of the Golden City, and his observations as he steps over the threshold.

It's allegory-time, by the way, as L.A. becomes a giant opulent but decadent hotel full of similarly transient folk chasing the dream and watching others esconsed in the perverse role-playing that entails grasping hold of the latter.

Unfortunately, Henley, Felder or Frey — whoever of the three composers of this opus supplied the lyrics — has dished out some pretty dire pretentiousness here. To wit: "*And in the Master's chambers / They gathered for the feast / They stab it with their steely knives / But they just can't kill the beast*".

Hardly "Maggie's Farm" when you think about it, and that's just exactly what I'm thinking the band were trying for with these stupid stanzas.

To make matters worse the basic track is rendered in a reggae "on-beat" mode; horror of horrors — L.A. reggae, complete with phoney clipped Caribbean accentuating of the old vocal nodes.

Randy Meisner tries to play with the buoyant prominence of a bonafide reggae bassist, but it's all so terrible flat and facile.

It's also absurd — how can such subject matter possibly warrant a phoney Jamaican backdrop?

Oh, well . . . the next track, "New Kid In Town" is very much archetypal Glenn Frey — the sensitive punk who can never decide whether to come on like James Dean or James Taylor and goes for a fairly unconvincing compromise instead.

Which isn't to say it's bad. As a matter of fact, it's quite pleasant by dint of a decent melody harboured within the lazy Mexicali feel.

Frey picks up on his "punk romantic", relating the solidly realistic observations of some young guitar-slinging gallant from the sticks — "the new kid in town" — taking in all the changes, uncertain, naive, easily hurt but resilient in his need to prove himself.

He sings with conviction, in much the same way as he did with "Desperados" 's "Tequila Sunrise". (It's also his only vocal on the album, while drummer Don Henley boasts four, which may indicate a shift in the leadership stakes.)

"Life In A Fast Lane" is the first Eagles hard rocker so far on this outing, and even the steely injection of Joe Walsh (whose name prefaces Henley and Frey's in the composition of this one) can't add the real desperado roughage to back up the fast-hand come-on.

The song, though, is good: a tough song about a pair of modern L.A. lovers, replete with references to L.A.-styled wasted elegance.

"Victim Of Love" on side two is another bonus; it's similarly jagged and brutal in its lyrical observations about romance gone to seed and has all its cards on the table — Walsh and Felder pushing at each other, the dynamic almost worthy of Led Zeppelin — but again the whole performance is too boxed in.

There should be fireworks lighting up here, but it doesn't happen.

Of the rest, well, there's one of those Joe Walsh dewy-eyed "the stars looked down" ballads which he used to drag Frey and Henley over on his solo albums so there's nothing new here at all.

It is however pretty, deceptively so as the lyrics deal with the melancholy of lost innocence, (as far as I can divine) and I'm a sucker for a decent melody, whoever's responsible for it.

Randy Meisner's "Try And Love Again" is another of the bassist's typically pleasant one-per-set pop-rock offerings of minimal lyrical consequence, but decent enough as mellifluous pop-rock goes.

Which leaves "Wasted Time", one of those leadenly poignant Henley parched-vocals piece-de-resistances ("Desperado" and, maybe "Take It To The Limit" are previous examples) that I can't stomach.

The album exits, by the way, on a note as grandiosely bloated and pretentious as it enters with "The Last Resort", a sallow gospel-styled piano thing with Henley and Co. cynically down-grading the California myth using the crueller quills of true-life history to dust the schtick down.

It's veritable metaphysical L.A. rock, and I find it virtually unlistenable, but that's partly because I still haven't worked which side the Eagles are coming from.

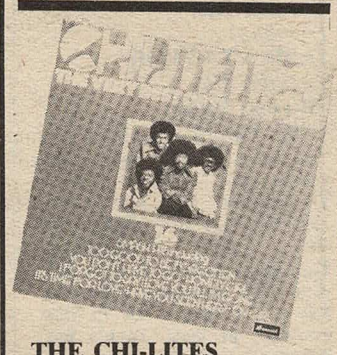
Behind this final pulpit-pounding and portentousness that holds this album together like oversized book-ends, though, I'll say this.

Simply that the record impresses me somehow. There's no laurels-resting, and a lot of thought and work has gone into its meticulous crafting.

Nevertheless, there's something slightly overbearing and sanctimonious in the idea of a king-pin L.A. band debunking the California Myth while they're bound to hone in the bucks by the barrel full for the effort.

"Oooos for the bucks" indeed! Time will tell just how deep the tongue was in that cheek.

Nick Kent



THE CHI-LITES
It's Chilite Time — The Very Best Of The Chi-Lites
(Brunswick)

ALBUM PRICES might be a real rip-off these days, but nevertheless this particular slab of black vinyl is great value.

Sixteen "smash hits" and sixty-two minutes of Chi-Lite music.

That is, sweet commercial soul, tight back up harmonies and tight trouser lead vocal, churning funk 'Superstition' keyboards lines, strings by the orchestra and songs of young love and late-night saxophones.

Come right down to it — it's choreographed bunk-up music for something pulled down the local discomat. "You Don't Have To Go" and me parents won't be home till late, honest.

The songs themselves range from the exquisite like the beaufiful "Have You Seen Her?", "Oh Girl," "I Never Had It So Good" and the *soooo* fine "It's Time For Love," to the almost unbelievably bland lyrics of "There Will Never Be Any Peace (Until God Is Seated At The Conference Table)" or "You Got To Be The One."

There's lots more besides. Like the anthem of ugly ducklings everywhere "Homely Girl," all about the dog at school who nobody wants to get hold of until one day she blossoms and . . . you *are* a swan!" "*I was the only one who offered to carry your books,*" the Chi-Lites remind her. Such nice boys.

As well as plenty of non-spectacular but most certainly quality commercial soul like "The Coldest Days Of My Life," with its passing of the seasons sound effects and autumn leaves falling gold and roaring waves, or the uptempo pseudo-Stax label horns on "I Found Sunshine," or the Isaax Hayes "Cafe Regio" Shaft movie feel to "Stoned Out Of My Mind," or the early Motown ambience of "I Forgot To Say I Love You Till I'm Gone."

All of it is unmistakably The Chi-Lites, most of it thoroughly enjoyable and you got over half an hour on each side before you have to change the record.

That long enough for you?

Tony Parsons

BILLY CONNOLLY
Atlantic Bridge
(Polydor)
MAX BOYCE
The Incredible Plan
(EMI)

THOSE PEOPLE who thought that Billy Connolly was an heir to the legacy of Lenny Bruce get some slight

IMPORTS

THE LATEST portion of over-warm, bluegrass-flavoured eccentricity by **John Hartford** comes in a package titled "Nobody Knows What You Did" (Flying Fish).

Cut over a year ago, in the company of stellar steel-man Buddy Emmons, Barefoot Jerry's Jim Colvard, plus David Briggs, Kenny Malone and other Nashville-ites emanating from the right side of Chet Atkins, the disc goes to prove the adage that the only thing you can expect from Hartford is the unexpected.

Like maybe the jokey 3/4 version of "Lara's Theme" from "Dr. Zhivago" that bedecks this elpee; the falsetto rendering of "False Hearted Tenor Waltz," or a piece called "John McLaughlin" that chugs like a rocky mountain train climbing up a one-inten.

If you want more, then you can always join in the singalong on "Granny Won'tcha Smoke Some Marijuana"; stomp you feet down hard to the jerky jazz of "Sly Feel"; or merely reflect on the attributes of the boobs beautiful immortalised by the lines of "Golden Globe Award" — "You can put them in my face any old time" etc., etc. Lightweight it all may be — but therapeutic it most definitely is.

And now to news of the other **Alex Harvey.**

Yep, there is another one and he's pretty famous in his home state of Tennessee, having penned "Delta Dawn", a monster hit for Tanya Tucker in her jailbait years, and "Reuben James" a ditty which kept Kenny Rogers off the streets during '69.

Trouble is, people keep finding his Capitol albums and start writing to Info City, claiming that they've found rarities by our own geriatric rocker.

Well, something had to give and thankfully I note that the U.S. type Harvey now styles himself as Alexander Harvey, under which name he's just recorded "Preshus Child" (GRT), an album that features some back-up work by the ubiquitous Charlie Daniels.

If you're a countryfreak who believes John R. Cash to be a tough cookie (actually he's only spent one afternoon and two nights in jail for pill-popping) then you should check out the dossier on **Merle Haggard.**

Stolen cars, armed robbery, bogus cheques — they're just a few of the little problems that helped contribute to Haggard's lengthy stay in San Quentin.

Now, 16 years after his release, Bakersfield's favourite fugitive has yet another newie around in "Roots Of My Raising" (Capitol). The way Haggard was raised (it reads like something out of Steinbeck's "Grapes Of Wrath") the disc could be worth homing in on.

D.C. La Rue, who recently had a U.S. hit with "Cathedrals" is back with "Tea Dance" (Pyramid), an album which features the New York cast of the show of that name — plus Lou Christie who supplied the vocals on a song called "Don't Keep It In The Shadows".

All of which has gotta be better than **"The Rice And Beans Orchestra"** (Dash), who foolishly admit to having an album that includes such offerings as "Symphonic Salsa" and "Blue Danube Hustle".

There now follows a brief interval during which the audience can throw up.

And now, if you're back in your seats again, I'll continue on my way by listing the rest of this week's arrivals, which include **Joe Zawinul's** "Concerto Retitled" (Atlantic), a compilation of previously released items **Phil Ochs'** "Chords Of Fame" (A & M); **Jimmy McGriff's** "Red Beans" (Groove Merchant), **Turley Richards'** "West Virginia Superstar" (Epic) and **Weather Report's** luxuriously-packaged "Live In Toyko" (CBS-Sony), which includes an extended version of side two of "I Sing The Body Electric", plus several other cuts never given an airing this side of Pearl Harbour.

Meanwhile, Godalming-based importers Stage One are crowing because they've got the exclusive rights to two Immediate offerings — **Humble Pie's** "Back Home Again", which includes "Natural Born Woman", "A Nifty Little Number", "Desperation", "Every Monther's Son" etc., and **The Small Faces'** "Magic Moments", a "Best Of . ." compilation comprising "Itchycoo Park", "I Can't Make It", "The Universal Soldier", "Tin Soldiers", "Here Comes The Nice", "Lazy Sunday" and a half a dozen others.

Neither of these albums is due for a British release prior to March '77.

Fred Dellar

support from his new album.

For the sake of the novelty value, half the album was recorded at Carnegie Hall, New York and half at Carnegie Hall, Dunfermline.

And for the sake of establishing his credentials with an American audience, Connolly uses the sort of expletive that Richard Nixon used to delete . . . on the very first track. .

He uses the word "shit", not once but many times. He also says "shitkicker". How, you may well argue that neither of these words are as naughty as the expressions that got Lenny Bruce into so much trouble, and you may be right.

So there we have it. Billy Connolly is clearly an outrageous radical and no mere cosy humourist. Those of us who thought otherwise must think again. The word "fuck" even turns up on another track.

You may care to know the context in which Billy uses the word "shit". Or, to translate it into the language of Fleet Street, "s---".

In fact, he tells his audience that he's discovered that "s—kicker" is an American word for farm labourer, and he's very pleased that he can use the word "s---" with impunity. (He thought, of course, that "s---kicker" was a person who kicked "s---").

He then sings a song called the "S---kickers Waltz" and tries to persuade the crowd to sing along. A few mumble among themselves.

"Go on," he says, "Get your teeth into it." They proceed to sing along. Could Lenny Bruce have persuaded Americans to sing the "Cocksuckers Waltz"? Or even the "Cocks---ers Waltz". Or even the "C---suckers Waltz". Fat chance. As it were.

That's not all there is to recommend this set. There's a lovely parody of Glen Campbell's "Rhinestone Cowboy", called "Half-stoned Cowboy". If it's not been released as a single, they should do it forthwith.

For those not entirely enamoured of Connolly's Glasgow routines, there's welcome news. He tends to dwell upon his background somewhat less than he used to. Perhaps he's running out of ethnic material.

On the other hand, perhaps he's just demonstrating his versatility, and the evidence is that he's a brilliant comedian in or out of his national context.

This is easily the funniest comedy album since the last Billy Connolly album.

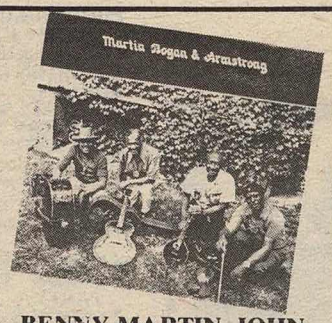
MAX BOYCE is a touch less appealing than Connolly, though making no less extravagant use of his broad accent. Welsh, in this case.

The problem with Max is that he's very into rugby, like many Welshmen, and if you don't know much about rugby, and particularly Welsh rugby, you won't find much to laugh about.

He never comes near Billy Connolly's superb, sick version of "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."

Connolly's rendition turns it into a song about a crematorium.

Bob Edmands



BENNY MARTIN, JOHN HARTFORD, LESTER FLATT, etc: *Tennessee Jubilee;*
NORMAN BLAKE, TUT TAYLOR, JETHRO BURNS, SAM BUSH: MARTIN, BOGAN & ARMSTRONG;
BUDDY EMMONS: *Steel Guitar (all Flying Fish)*
DAVID BROMBERG, VASSAR CLEMENTS, ETC: *Hillbilly Jazz (Flying Fish, Import)*

YOU'RE EXCUSED for not having heard of Flying Fish Records.

Far from being a multinational conglomerate, it's run by Bruce Kaplan and Keith Case, two students from Chicago, and dedicated to the thankless task of getting the cultural heritage of American music down on vinyl for posterity. Thus, with the help of producer and sometime musician Michael Melford, they have come up with the above from the country/bluegrass-/folk axis, currently deemed a no-go area by the larger concerns.

Antiquarianism, Cynthia, is a dangerous game.

Indeed, contemporary man, gazing at the endless public money being poured into places like the National Theatre in order to seal hermetically the popular performing arts of a bygone age, might be forgiven for musing why Rocky Sharpe and the Razors were forced to break up at the height of their popularity due to lack of funds.

If "Hamlet" had failed to put bums on seats, I feel Shakespeare would have been more inclined to mumble "tough venison" into his pint of sack and turn his hand to dirty comedies than beg for an Arts Council grant on the grounds of public myopia.

Happy accidents apart, the laws of supply and demand run any kind of entertainment business and pious rearguard actions are often fought at the expense of genuine musical growth.

Not that you can much question the motives of Flying Fish, but the naivete of their records does occasionally rankle.

Dropping bluegrass fiddler Benny Martin, an accompanist by trade, in a studio with Lester Flatt, John Hartford *et al* and allowing him to whip through his favourite toons is unlikely to produce anything more remarkable than one of Wally Whyton's house bands can come up with, and it doesn't.

"Tennessee Jubilee" is naught but the usual perfunctory trot through picking styles and idioms that have been exercised considerably better and Melford's one-dimensional approach to the production does nothing to heave the record out of the mundane.

The same applies to the Blake-Taylor-Bush effort which, with the presence of Dave Holland on bass, could have been an interesting investigation of jazz roots in country had not the back-slapping conservatism of all concerned rendered the project stillborn.

If there was any fire or imagination cutting through the smothering bonhomie of these sessions it didn't find its way on to the resulting record.

The guiding spirit is a reverence for form that leaves no room for the verve and positivism that made it such powerful music in the first place. Bluegrass got to be bluegrass by ignoring precepts and not slavishly obeying them.

Not that playing the text book is without its possibilities; "Hillbilly Jazz", a double-album guided tour through Western Swing by a huge band led by David Bromberg and Vassar Clements, cuts it because it all adds up.

Although the playing is educated enough, Bob Wills and others did it better and did it first; however they never made an album as good as this. Like the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's "Will The Circle Be Unbroken", the thread carefully run through all four sides makes for an overview of musical form that you couldn't have got any other way.

But even this seems like so much anthropological nit-picking when you put it next to the exotic wonders of Martin, Bogan and Armstrong, three black veterans from Tennessee, who are the last surviving example of the black string bands who toured the South during the depression and eked out a living on the basis of their ability in the greatest of American art forms, giving the people what the people want.

Blues, jazz, ragtime, country and unashamed pop played with the kind of earthy, instinctual joy that academicism would only cramp.

Everything from "Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out" to "Blue Ridge Mountain Blues"; it's vulgar and corny as hell, just like rock and roll.

"Martin, Brogan and Armstrong" is an album for anyone who loved the music of Ry Cooder or professes any kind of interest in the spectrum of American traditional forms.

It's one piece without which the jigsaw just isn't complete.

Buddy Emmons, the current hot shot session player, is the latest in a long line to address himself to the problem of making a pedal-steel album.

It's a backing instrument, a space filler, and a melody line strains its versatility somewhat, even with a player as good as this.

The album is as good as pedal-steel records can be, excepting the sublime touch of Red Rhodes, who to my mind closed the argument years ago with "Velvet Hammer In A Cowboy Band."

Flying Fish albums, by the way, are distributed in the U.K. by Sonet Records.

David Hepworth

American Queen?

Three-fifths of Boston: Masterminds Tom Scholz (left) and Brad Delp (right) with Sib Hashian (centre).

BOSTON
Boston (Epic)

A group called Boston, unknown in August, have just seen their debut album go platinum in the U.S. in 11 weeks. So what's the score? **TONY STEWART** *investigates.*

NO DOUBT astonished by the meteoric rise of an entirely unknown quantity (last sighted in the upper-deck of the American album charts) the British end of Epic has now released Boston's debut album.

Perhaps all record company personnel have been instructed to cross their fingers and pray that the record's same unpredictable and mysterious commerical triumph in the States will be repeated here.

After all, who can really explain with any certainty why an obscure band working from a basement studio in Massachusetts should make a first album which, in 11 weeks, goes platinum.

Really. They've sold a million; the prospect of which seemed, on the US release of the set in August, as likely as lightning striking you dead as you read this review.

But then the reasons why Americans have taken to this set so enthusiastically are as inexplicable as the wonders of nature. "Boston" is by no means a masterpiece.

The musical brain of the band is Tom Scholtz; a proficient, sometimes exciting, guitarist who's composed most of the material, also plays keyboards and co-produced the album.

Next, there's a fine, clear voiced and passionate singer called Brad Delp who also plays rhythm guitar and co-wrote two songs with Scholz.

Behind these two are their assistants; guitarist Barry Goudreau, bass-player Fran Sheehan and Sib Hashian on drums.

And *assistants* **they most certainly are, because it is Scholz and Delp who almost completely dominate the recording in the same way that Mercury and May are the creative and performing axis of Queen; a comparison which is not unjustified in the light of their respective musical styles either.**

Boston are a highly derivitive band who, like Queen, have listened very closely to the first wave of so-called *progressive* **or** *heavy metal* **rock from Britain and have injected the style with polish, professionalism and melodic originality.**

Also this outfit, like Blue Oyster Cult, have been inspired by The Byrds, and this kind of eclecticism ensures their music is not too painful on the ears, nor do they go as far as playing outright pop.

Out of the nine cuts here only one, "Let Me Take You Home Tonight", fails to make any impression.

The rest are good tunes, played well and which all combine energy and expertise in a manner that sometimes borders on being clinical ("Rock & Roll Band"), but generally works well.

Although Scholz and Delp provide a continuation because of their distinctive individual styles, tracks still differ enormously.

"More Than A Feeling" and "Hitch A Ride" are acoustically based with strong commercial hooks, but they also indulge in some hard-hitting boogie with "Smokin'", and then turn their attention to higher musical ideals with a long track called "Foreplay / Long Time", which, in approach, is very close to the likes of Nice and ELP.

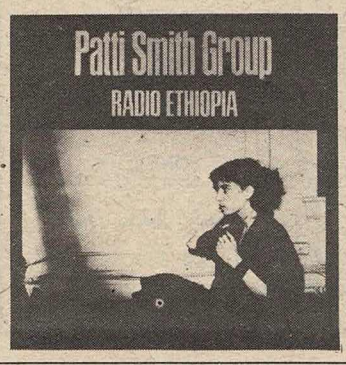
For a debut album it's excellent and well worth an investment.

But why a million people should go bonkers over it is still, to me, a mystery.

BEWARE OF IMITATORS
LISTEN TO THE ORIGINATORS!

RADIO ETHIOPIA
PATTI SMITH GROUP

"Patti Smith has it in her to be to the seventies what Presley and the Stones were to previous decades. She looks to be the first woman with style and energy enough to become a figurehead for a generation."
Evening News



Album SPARTY 1001
Cassette TC ARTY 1001

Her remarkable new album 'Radio Ethiopia' out now on Arista.

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

THURSDAY

ABERYSTWYTH University: MUD
ACCRINGTON Technical College: BETHNAL
AYLESBURY Britannia: THUMPER
BELFAST Ulster Hall: RALPH McTELL
BIRMINGHAM Aston University: NOEL MURPHY
BIRMINGHAM Barrel Organ: HOOKER
BIRMINGHAM Chalet Country Club: SMACKEE
BIRMINGHAM Golden Eagle: SHOOP SHOOP
BIRMINGHAM Monica Club: APPLEJACKS
BIRMINGHAM Moseley Fighting Cocks: THE FIRST BAND
BIRMINGHAM St. Dunstan's Centre: JAKE THACKRAY
BRAINTREE Alexandria High School: AFTER THE FIRE
BRAMPTON R.A.F. Fountain Club: HELLRAISERS / TRAX
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: JACOB MARLEY
BURNLEY Hapton Railway Hotel: BRIAN DEWHURST
CATTERICK Centurian Club: BREAKER
COVENTRY La Chaumiere: SOUL DIRECTION
CROYDON Fairfield Hall: JOAN ARMATRADING
DERBY Cleopatra's: DRUID
DUNDEE Caird Hall: SEX PISTOLS/THE CLASH-/JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
EDINBURGH University: CASPIAN
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: RORY GALLAGHER
GRIMSBY St. James House: BILL CADDICK
HENLOW R.A.F. Bonanza Club: DESMOND DECKER
HIGH WYCOMBE Nags Head: STRANGLERS
LEEDS The Pentagon: CISSY STONE BAND
LONDON BARNES Red Lion: FRED RICKSHAW'S HOT GOOLIES
LONDON BRIXTON Loughborough Hotel: SUN SESSION
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: LANDSCAPE
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: BIG JIM SULLIVAN'S TIGER
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: BABE RUTH
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Odeon: STEVE HILLAGE BAND/NOVA
LONDON Marquee Club: UPP
LONDON N.11 Orange Tree: FLYING SAUCERS
LONDON PICCADILLY White Bear: JAMBALAYA
LONDON RICHMOND Beehive: STAN ARNOLD
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
LONDON STRATFORD Cart & Horses: JERRY THE FERRET
LONDON University College: COUNT BISHOPS
LONDON W.1 Speakeasy: JOHN OTWAY/WILD WILLY BARRET
LOUGHBOROUGH Sutton Bonington School: BOUNCER/ROCK ISLAND LINE
LYNHAM Pegasus Club: GIGGLES
MAIDSTONE Technical College: FLYING ACES
MANCHESTER Seven Stars: CAPTAIN COOK'S DOG
MANCHESTER Technical College: SUPERCHARGE
MONMOUTH White Swan Hotel: NIGHT BIRD
NEWCASTLE Polytechnic: MOON
NORWICH City College: CRAZY CAVAN 'N' THE RHYTHM ROCKERS
NORWICH Crockers Disco: CHANTS
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: SF 2
NOTTINGHAM Palais: J.A.L.N. BAND
PLYMOUTH Arts Centre: COUSIN JOE
PORTSMOUTH College of Education: F.B.I.
PORTSMOUTH Victory Club: BRANDY
POYNTON Folk Centre: REVEREND KENNETH LOVELESS
READING Silver Horse Club: HEATWAVE
SHREWSBURY Regal Cinema: MUNGO JERRY
SLOUGH College of Education: MAN/ALKATRAZ
STOKE Alsager College: CADILLAC
SWANSEA Circles Club: BURLESQUE
TEWKESBURY Roses Theatre: CHRIS BARBER BAND
TORQUAY 400 Club: PIGSTY HILL LIGHT ORCHESTRA
WORCESTER Bank House: STEVE GIBBONS BAND
YEOVILTON Heron Club: LIVERPOOL EXPRESS

FRIDAY

BIRMINGHAM Fox Inn: THREE'S COMPANY
BLACKBURN St George's Hall: STEVE HILLAGE BAND / NOVA
BOURNEMOUTH Inner Village: PIGSTY HILL LIGHT ORCHESTRA
BRIGHTON Dome: JOAN ARMATRADING
BRISTOL Granary: COUSIN JOE FROM NEW ORLEANS
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: STORMTROOPER
BURTON 76 Club: STRAY
CARLISLE Swan Inn: KEITH MANIFOLD
CHATHAM Old Ash Tree: FOGG
CHEADLE The Highwayman: MUSCLES
CHESTER Emu RAF Club: CHANTS
COWDENBEATH Claymore Lounge: CASPIAN
CRAWLEY College of Technology: ROOGALATOR / A.F.T. / 2nd OFFENCE
CREDITON White Swan: TONY ROSE
CROYDON Whitgift School: ROCK ISLAND LINE
EPSOM Baths Hall: ALBION DANCE BAND
ESTON James Finegan Hall: NORTHERN FRONT / SWAN ARCADE / ALAN SPENCE
FARNBOROUGH Technical College: CHARLIE
FOLKESTONE Toby's: BOUNCER
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: RORY GALLAGHER
GLASGOW Strathclyde University: SCAFFOLD / FATSO
GLASGOW University: ALVIN STARDUST
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Cellar Folk Club: FLAKY PASTRY
HUNTINGDON Technical College: ARBRE
KINGSWINFORD Woodman Inn: BILL CADDICK
LEEDS The Pentagon: CISSY STONE BAND
LEICESTER Belgrave WMC: APPLEJACKS
LEIGHTON BUZZARD Hunt Hotel: CAUGHT IN THE ACT
LINCOLN College of Education: STEVE BROWN BAND
LINCOLN Swiss Cottage: BERNARD WRIGLEY
LINCOLN Technical College: STEVE GIBBONS BAND
LIVERPOOL Annabelle's: SHEER ELEGANCE
LIVERPOOL Eric's Club: FLAMIN' GROOVIES
LONDON CALEDONIAN ROAD Prince of Wales: LIMOSINE
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: TROUPER
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: CUCKOO with G.T. MOORE / SPECIAL BREW
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: BABE RUTH
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: LEE KOSMIN BAND
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope and Anchor: DANA GILLESPIE
LONDON Marquee Club: LEE JACKSON'S STRIP JACK
LONDON MARYLEBONE Cockpit Theatre: NATIONAL YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: JACKSON BROWNE / WARREN ZEVON
LONDON PADDINGTON Western Counties: WAVEBAND

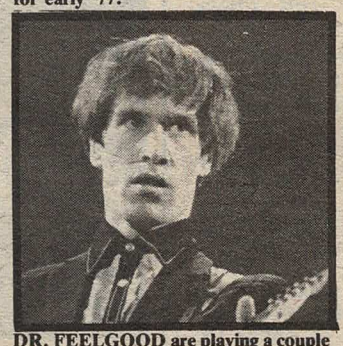
RORY GALLAGHER kicks off his extensive British and Iriah tour this week. Most of his gigs are scheduled for the New Year, but he has pre-Christmas dates at Glasgow (Thursday and Friday) and Birmingham (Saturday).

STREETWALKERS are back in business after their lengthy lay-off, caused by three personnel changes. They have a London concert on Sunday, to be followed by a New Year British tour. Pictured above is Roger Chapman.

MANFRED MANN and the Earthband headline three concerts before Christmas, appearing at Southampton (Friday), Cardiff (Saturday) and London New Victoria (Sunday). A more extensive tour is being lined up for early '77.

GARY GLITTER makes his stage comeback, after his ten-month retirement, when he tops a special charity concert in London on Sunday. Also taking part are Marc Bolan, the G-Band, Linda Lewis, John Miles and Guys 'n' Dolls.

- **ROD STEWART contines his tour with dates at Newcastle (Friday and Saturday) and London Olympia (four nights from next Tuesday).**
- **LINDISFARNE are re-forming specially and only for two dates in their home town of Newcastle next Wednesday and Thursday.**
- **JACKSON BROWNE, having completed his European dates, returns to Britain to play two London concerts on Friday and Saturday.**
- **STEVE HILLAGE (Thursday), MUD (Saturday) and CARAVAN (next Wednesday) all have major London concerts to complete their current tour itineraries.**
- **MAN play the very last date of their farewell tour, prior to their irrevocable break-up, at Slough on Thursday.**
- **RALPH McTELL pays his annual visit to Ulster for a special Christmas concert in Belfast on Thursday.**



DR. FEELGOOD are playing a couple of Christmas shows, the first of which takes place at London Hammersmith Odeon on Sunday. The other is scheduled for Southend Kursaal on Christmas Eve. Pictured above is Wilko Johnson.

LONDON PUTNEY Half Moon: ALBA
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: BLIMPS
LONDON STRAND King's College: MAX MERRITT AND THE METEORS
LONDON University College Medical School: MUNGO JERRY
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: SOX
LONDON W1 Gilly's Club: MAC KISSOON
LONDON W1 Speakeasy: PACIFIC EARDRUM
LONDON WC1 Drill Hall (Chenies Street): BRUCE LACEY AND JILL BRUCE
LOUGHTON College of Education: U-BOAT
MANCHESTER Electric Circus: SHANGHAI
MANSFIELD College of Education: FLYING ACES
NEWCASTLE City Hall: ROD STEWART BAND
NORTHAMPTON Black Lion: JOHN OTWAY / WILD WILLY BARRET
NORWICH Crockers Disco: BRANDY
NOTTINGHAM (West) Technical College: DRUID
PAISLEY Technical College: CADO BELLE
PETERBOROUGH Technical College: STRANGLERS
PRESTON Chorley Little Theatre: BRIAN DEWHURST / TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND
RAMSGATE Van Gogh: BAZZA
REDDITCH Sticky Wicket: STAGE FRIGHT
SALISBURY City Hall: GIGGLES
SANQUAR Town Hall: KOSS
SCARBOROUGH Penthouse: MOON
SOUTHAMPTON Gaumont: MANFRED MANN'S EARTHBAND
SOUTHPORT Coronation Hotel: ALISTAIR ANDERSON
ST NEO'S Round Table: SMACKEE
STROOD Old Gun: BODEAN
SUNDERLAND Annabelle's: GENO WASHINGTON BAND
SWANSEA Brangwyn Hall: EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS
TILBURY Tute Club: BLOOBLO
WEST BROMWICH T.I. Ballroom: ZENDA JACKS
WEST DRAYTON RAF Station: CHRIS BARBER BAND
WESTON-SUPER-MARE Playhouse: FRED WEDLOCK / MECHANICAL HORSETROUGH / NOLA
WOLVERHAMPTON Lafayette: BURLESQUE

SATURDAY

BATH Globe Inn: BETHNAL
BICESTER Goble's Restaurant: FLAKY PASTRY
BIRMINGHAM Bingley Hall: RORY GALLAGHER
BIRMINGHAM Royal Angus Hotel: APPLEJACKS
BIRMINGHAM Santa Rosa Club: CIMARONS
BRACKNELL Sports Centre: HAWKWIND
BRIGHTON Stanmere School: BODEAN
BRISTOL Portway Club: NEW VAUDEVILLE BAND
BURTON Galaxy Club: F.B.I.
BURTON Paradise Room: GEORGE HATCHER BAND
CANVEY ISLAND Kings Country Club: CHANTS
CARLISLE Upstairs Club: BRIAN DEWHURST
CARDIFF Capitol Theatre: MANFRED MANN'S EARTHBAND
CARLISLE Upstairs Club: BRIAN DEWHURST / TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND
CHEADLE The Highwayman: MUSCLES
CIRENCESTER Corn Hall: SHEER ELEGANCE
CLEVELAND Philmore Disco: ALVIN STARDUST
CORBY Nag's Head: SOUL DIRECTION
COVENTRY Mr. George's: JET HARRIS
DERBY Cleopatra's: PLUMMET AIRLINES
DERBY Swan Inn: KEITH MANIFOLD
DUDLEY J.B.'s Club: STEVE GIBBONS BAND
DUDLEY Teachers' Training College: TRAPEZE
EDINBURGH Triangle Folk Club'; CHRISTMAS PARTY
FOLKESTONE Leas Cliff Hall: STEVE HILLAGE BAND / NOVA
GALASHEILS Kingsway Centre: CASPIAN
GLOUCESTER Leisure Centre: ASWAD
GLOUCESTER Technical College: BRANDY
HUNTINGDON B.R.J. Club: BLOOBLO
KENILWORTH De Montfort Hotel: BREAKER
LIVERPOOL Stadium: EDDIE & THE HOT RODS
LONDON Alexandra Palace: BEATLE FAN CONVENTION
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: BONE IDOL
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: ROOGALATOR / BUSTER CRABBE
LONDON COVENT GARDEN Rock Garden: KOSSAGA / BOOMBAYA
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
LONDON ISLINGTON Hope & Anchor: DANA GILLESPIE
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: JACKSON BROWNE / WARREN ZEVON
LONDON PECKHAM Bouncing Ball: DESMOND DEKKER
LONDON REGENT'S PK. Cecil Sharpe House: BILL CADDICK
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: TUSH
LONDON STREATHAM Odeon: MUD
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: SOX
LONDON W.1 Speakeasy: LEE KOSMIN BAND
LONDON W.12 White Horse: WAVEBAND
MAIDENHEAD Skindles: DEAF SCHOOL
MANCHESTER Electric Circus: SAM APPLE PIE
MANCHESTER Free Trade Hall: SPINNERS
MANLEY Village Hall: DAVE BURLAND
NEWCASTLE City Hall: ROD STEWART BAND
NORWICH Crockers Disco: BEANO
OLDHAM Technical College: JOHN OTWAY / WILD WILLY BARRET
PETERLEE Senate Club: SPARROW
REDCAR Coatham Bowl: MOON
REDDITCH Hopwood Caravan Club: HOOKER
SCUNTHORPE Priory Hotel: STRAY
SHEFFIELD Highcliffe Hotel: BOB DAVENPORT
SOUTHAMPTON Gaumont Theatre: JOAN ARMATRADING
STOKE Rose & Crown Etruria: TONY ROSE
STOWMARKET Sports Centre: GENO WASHINGTON BAND
UXBRIDGE Technical College: SCREAMIN' LORD SUTCH
WADDINGTON R.A.F. Station: CHRIS BARBER BAND

SUNDAY

AYLESBURY John Hampden: RENARD BAND
BARNET Salisbury Hotel: CHRIS BARBER BAND
BATH Pavilion: KEITH MANIFOLD
BEDFORD Nite Spot: BROTHER KIP
BIRMINGHAM Barrel Organ (lunchtime): MENSCH
BIRMINGHAM Monica Club: THREE'S COMPANY / BOB KING
BRIGHTON Top Rank: MUSCLES
BRISTOL Colston Hall: FRED WEDLOCK / MECHANICAL HORSETROUGH / NOLA
BRISTOL Naval Volunteer: TRUTH
COVENTRY Club Zhivago: APPLEJACKS
CROYDON Greyhound: BUDGIE
DARTFORD Horns Cross Bull: BODEAN
HITCHIN Folk Club: FLAKY PASTRY
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: EDDIE & THE HOT RODS
HITCHIN Folk Club: FLAKY PASTRY
KENDAL Brewery Arts Centre: BERNARD WRIGLEY
KINGSBURY Bandwagon: BETHNAL
LEEDS Fforde Green Hotel: TRAPEZE
LONDON Alexandra Palace: BEATLE FAN CONVENTION
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: SCARECROW
LONDON CHALK FARM Roundhouse: STREETWALKERS / STEVE GIBBONS BAND / CRAZY CAVAN
LONDON DRURY LANE Theatre Royal (charity concert): GARY GLITTER / MARC BOLAN / LINDA LEWIS / G-BAND / JOHNNY MILES / GUYS 'N' DOLLS
LONDON FINCHLEY Torrington: PLUMMET AIRLINES
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Palais: DR. FEELGOOD / CLOVER / LEW LEWIS GROUP
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: BUSHWACKERS
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: BOWLES BROS. BAND
LONDON LEWISHAM Oden: HAWKWIND
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: MANFRED MANN'S EARTHBAND
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: BURLESQUE
LONDON WOOLWICH Tramshed: SHUCKS / ALAN WHITE
NEW BARNET Duke of Lancaster: WAVEBAND
POYNTON Folk Centre: BULLOCK SMITHY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY
ROTHERHAM Scala Theatre: NEW SEEKERS
SHEFFIELD Top Rank: CURVED AIR
SOUTH NORMANTON Community Centre: BRIAN DEWHURST
SOUTHWELL Admiral Nelson: BILL CADDICK
ST. ALBANS Goat Inn Folk Club: CHRISTMAS PARTY
THAME Swan Hotel: JOHN & CHRIS LESLEY

MONDAY

BARRY Memorial Hall: RACING CARS
BIRMINGHAM Bingley Hall: SEX PISTOLS/THE CLASH / JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
BRIGHTON Dome: STEVE HILLAGE BAND/NOVA
BURTON 76 Club: STEVE GIBBONS BAND
CHIGWELL ROW Camelot: SOUNDS COUNTRY
COVENTRY Smithfield Hotel: BREAKER
ERDINGTON Queen's Head: QUILL
IPSWICH Arts Theatre: AFTER THE FIRE
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: TOPAZ
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: SPITERI
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: MIDNIGHT WOLF
LONDON KENSINGTON Nashville: STRIP JACK
LONDON PUTNEY Half Moon: CHRISTMAS PARTY
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: ZIP NOLAN
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: BYCRY
NELSON Silverman Hall: AGNES STRANGE
PRESTON Windsor Castle Hotel: BRIAN DEWHURST/TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND
ROCHDALE Hollingworth: THERAPY
SLOUGH Holiday Inn: ACKER BILK BAND
STOURBRIDGE Stone Manor: APPLEJACKS
SUTTON-IN-ASHFIELD Golden Diamond: TIGER

TUESDAY

BIRMINGHAM Barbarella's: HOOKER
BIRMINGHAM Golden Eagle: SUPANOVA
BIRMINGHAM Railway Hotel: JAMESON RAID
BLACKPOOL Tiffany's: TIGER
CHESTERFIELD Haslendon New Inn: BRIAN DEWHURST/TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND
DERBY King's Hall: EDDIE & THE HOT RODS
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Great Harry: TEQUILA
HIGH WYCOMBE Chiltern Club: GENO WASHINGTON BAND
KENILWORTH 1812 Club: BREAKER
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: SLOWBONE
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: TROGGS
LONDON EDMONTON Trade Hall: APPLEJACKS
LONDON KENSINGTON Nashville: PACIFIC EARDRUM
LONDON KENSINGTON Olympia: ROD STEWART BAND
LONDON Marquee Club: MOON
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: DUST ON THE NEEDLE
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: AMAZOR BALDES
NOTTINGHAM Imperial Hotel: GAFFA
PLYMOUTH Woods Leisure Centre: SEX PISTOLS / THE CLASH / JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
RHONDDA Sports Centre: RACING CARS
SHREWSBURY Boathorse Hotel: BERNARD WRIGLEY
ST. HELENS Theatre Royal: THE REAL THING-/CHANTS
SWINDON Brunel Rooms: CISSY STONE BAND
TORQUAY 400 Ballroom: FLIGHT 56 / SAHARA

WEDNESDAY

BELPER Railway Hotel: KEITH MANIFOLD
BRISTOL Granary: PIGSTY HILL LIGHT ORCHESTRA
CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange: JOHNNY WAKELIN
COVENTRY Sportsman Club: APPLEJACKS
CROMER West Runton Pavilion: JOHN MILES
HUNTINGDON Camelot Club: GENO WASHINGTON BAND
LONDON CAMDEN Brecknock: TUSH
LONDON CAMDEN Dingwalls: CAROL GRIMES & THE LONDON BOOGIE BAND
LONDON HAMMERSMITH Red Cow: ASTRA
LONDON KENSINGTON Nashville: ASWAD
LONDON KENSINGTON Olympia: ROD STEWART BAND
LONDON Marquee Club: ALBERTO Y LOST TRIOS PARANOIAS
LONDON New Victoria Theatre: CARAVAN
LONDON OXFORD ST. 100 Club: ACKER BILK BAND
LONDON PADDINGTON Fang's Disco: HEATWAVE
LONDON STOKE NEWINGTON Rochester Castle: REMUS DOWN BOULEVARD
LONDON Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: MANIACS
LONDON W1 Marquee Club: ALBERTO Y LOST TRIOS PARANOIAS
NEWCASTLE City Hall: LINDISFARNE
NEWPORT (Gwent) Stowaway Club: RACING CARS
NOTTINGHAM Long Eaton People's Hall: PLUMMET AIRLINES
PAIGNTON Penelope's: SEX PISTOLS/THE CLASH-/JOHNNY THUNDER'S HEARTBREAKERS
STAFFORD High School: BLACK DOG/PURPLE HAZE

RESIDENCIES

BATLEY Variety Club: GRUMBLEWEEDS
Sunday to Friday (24)
BLACKBURN Cavendish: BUSH COUNTRY
Thursday for three days
COVENTRY City Centre Club: NEW VAUDEVILLE BAND
Monday to Friday (24)
DERBY Bailey's: SHOWADDYWADDY (Thursday for three days) / SWEET SENSATION (Wednesday, 22, for three days)
GLASGOW Apollo Centre: SYDNEY DEVINE
Monday (20) for three days
HULL Bailey's: JACKDAW
Thursday for three days
LEICESTER Bailey's: PAPER LACE
Monday to Friday (24)
LONDON KENSINGTON The Nashville: MEAL TICKET
Thursday for three days
LONDON KENSINGTON Olympia: ROD STEWART BAND
Tuesday (21) for four days
LONDON Marquee Club: U.F.O.
Saturday for three days
LUTON Cesar's: BARRON KNIGHTS
Sunday to Friday (24)
MEXBOROUGH Jesters: SCALLYWAG
Tuesday (21) for four days
NEWCASTLE La Dolce Vita (doubling **SOUTH SHIELDS** Tavern): LOVE AFFAIR
Monday to Friday (24)
OLDHAM Bailey's: CANDLEWICK GREEN (Thursday for three days) / CHAMPAGNE (Monday for five days)
SALISBURY High Post Hotel: DAVE BERRY & THE CLEVELAND COUNTY BAND
Sunday to Friday (24)
SHEFFIELD Bailey's: MIKE BERRY & THE OUTLAWS
Thursday for three days
STOCKTON Fiesta: SCOTT FITZGERALD
Monday to Friday (24)
STOKE Bailey's: O'HARA'S PLAYBOYS
Tuesday (21) for four days
WAKEFIELD Theatre Club: PETERS & LEE
Monday for two weeks (except Xmas Day)
WATFORD Bailey's: SPARROW
Sunday to Friday (24)

Come up and see me, make me . . . SMILE, you're on . . .

ON THE TOWN

ALI FRIGHTS BACK

Steve Harley
MANCHESTER

THE TOUTS, who know about these things, told me the thing sold out five days ago. They clean up tonight. Happy days.

Steve Harley reckons it sold out a couple of weeks back. He's more than a little pleased about that.

The fact it *has* sold out is a shock to me. Most of the other dates have too. Happy days.

Harley still has his audience and that's enough motivation. His audience love him. A lot. Indiscriminately? Sure . . . try telling Harley that.

I felt the same kind of ridiculous gush flow over from his audience as I did from the teenies at a David Essex do . . . an Essex movement got screams, a Harley action received applause. He drank a glass of water . . . clap clap clap clap.

"Don't underestimate my audience," he says later. "I mean, I may have drunk that glass of water real classy." Right.

Actually, if we're talking about class, the hastily arranged support The Surprise Sisters will do for a definition. Real neat band, Paul Getty excelled on saxes, the four sisters thighed, flapped and sang just right. From Blackburn, they are. Thankyou Blackburn. And a round of applause for the people responsible for designing their, uh, uniforms. Slurp.

A short gap between the acts, which was great, and the Harley show is ready to go. One of those tape intros, full blown choir vocal, symphonic force, then SNAP! — "Here Comes The Sun". The response is amazing.

The band isn't too bad, either. The band being Jo Partridge on guitar, Duncan Mackay on expensive keyboards, George Ford on bass, Stuart Elliot on drums, Lyndsay Elliot percussioning it. At the back three vocalists — Mr Rivers, Mr Calver and Mr Perry, who looked wrong and seem a dubious addition, though they did add a little oomph to proceedings.

Harley himself is decked out in a sub-clown outfit, baggy checked trousers, bastardised short army jacket, prettied up with colour. For "Innocence And Guilt", a veritable tour de force, he loped on, all melancholy, red nose, Cinderella brush, floppy jacket — the clown get-up complete. A gentle self-mockery? Mocking those who refuse to take him seriously? It doesn't really matter: Harley doesn't think it does, neither do I: it just looks good . . .

"Innocence And Guilt" is performed with a heck of a production throw-up. All sorts of vocal distortion, theatrical intentions, anguished screams and even, er, falling snow. The band play real dirty; apart from that it could be something from a "Muppet Show" (which is a compliment).

The set structuring was spot-on, old songs, new songs, well paced, the light show superb. The sound wasn't too hot, nasty buzzing breaking through towards the end, but for most of the time it was enough to get by.

The audience didn't care, anyway. Greedily they lapped it all up, as familiar with the new album songs as with "Mr Soft", "Sebastian", "Tumbling Down" and the like. The way they sang along on "Come Up And See Me" — touching . . .

So what am I supposed to say? Harley's vocal mannerisms, limp wrist poses, overall performance, meant nought to me—but I was totally alone. Apart from unfortunate technical upsets the show was faultless. Pointless but faultless.

Steve Harley is a fine craftsman of musical and lyrical kitsch (a snobbish concept, kitsch, more sophisticated and, y'know, sincere than mere Mass Art). His words at most supply a demand from his audience for fascination without labour.

Harley is about entertainment, diversion, pacification — and he's an OK pop musician. Right?

Apres le gig, in this massive room in the Midland Hotel with bottles and food, the cost of which would easily get a crisp P.A. set up for a young new band, Harley sounds off.

His dislike for music papers is known. "Your paper sucks. If I was going to knock in things for twenty bucks a week I'd do it for a paper that didn't distort the truth."

Everything except his music is reduced to a level of pure shit. "Everybody's full of shit," he keeps saying. "It's all about survival of the fittest . . . and I'm tough."

I try to be nosy and boring. After the dates, what next? "What's it matter?" What you all about, Steve, Art or Entertainment? "Bullshit," he says. "What's it matter?"

His attitude is so right. He's one of the Great Con Men. What's anything matter? Injustice, howzabout that? As good as anything. Harley cuts up about Roland Kirk fortnighting it at Ronnie Scott's, one good arm, playing three saxes at once, blind, and the cover of *Melody Maker* going to some idiot with a safety pin stuck through his ear 'cos that sells papers.

"This is what I'm up against. I'm in the same area as Kirk, and everybody labels me a pop musician!" It's then I know, finally, conclusively, that Steve Harley is having us all on.

"What if at the last moment, when the banquet table is set and the cymbals clash, there should appear suddenly, and wholly without warning, a silver platter on which even the blind could see that there is nothing more, and nothing less, than two enormous lumps of shit" — Henry Miller.

Paul Morley

While the legendary Flamin' Groovies kiss farewell with a . . .

SHAKIN' CORPSE

Flamin' Groovies
IMPERIAL COLLEGE

"UH, JEST let us toon up, ladies an' gentlemen . . ."

Baroom bupbubbada bowm bowm bowm, baroom bupbubbada bowm bowm bowm . . . hey, it's . . . no, it can't be!

Baroom bupbubbada bowm bowm bowm, baroom bupbubbada bowm bowm bowm . . . it can't be!

"Baby's good to me ya know, she's happy as can be ya know, she said so . . ."

It is! And it's so vibrant, so powerful — *and* so accurate.

"I'm in love with her and I feel fine."

These guys are starting their set with a Beatles number! The harmonies are pretty rough, but it's magic, and the response is loud.

Badumbomp bupbubbadabowm . . . hey, it's . . . "She Said Yeah"!

These guys are doing a Rolling Stones song!

Sixties fetishists I knew the Groovies to be, but I didn't realise it went this deep. Last time I saw them, at Bickershaw on Cup Final day 1972, they looked how I then imagined punks to look and they played Lou Reed songs — "Sweet Jane", anyway.

But then they weren't managed by Greg Shaw, America's one-man Great British Invasion Preservation Society. Now the Groovies look how you'd imagine a flash Mersey band to look — dark suits, Beatle cuts, three F-hole guitars and a violin bass.

The time warp effect is exaggerated by the Imperial College hall's novel layout: you can sit in the serried seats up back and see the stage, lit only by atmospherically rudimentary spots, with five moptop dolls bopping away, the drummer shaking his just like Ringo, and in front of that there's a tight cluster of joyfully seething humanity, and between you and them there's just enough space for a good crowd of dancers.

When you go closer you discover the crowd to be long-haired or safety-pinned, the band take on a burden of individuality, and the spotlight halo dissipates; it's heady rock, but it loses some of its through-a-glass aura. So let's struggle — and it's hard — to restrain ourselves from joining the steady flow of sitters enticed into being boppers, and check the show.

From their latest album comes the flaming groovy rock'n'roll flash of "Let The Boy Rock & Roll", followed by the boogie cruise of "House Of Blue Light", and then an excellent version of "Lover Not A Fighter" — a great great song.

The vocals aren't exactly brilliant — Cyril Jordan honks while main vocalist Chris Wilson often has to manipulate his way across the octaves to keep a hold on a tune — but instrumentally they are excellent . . . yet it's an excellence which requires sublimation. In a way, like all revivalists, they might as well be anyone, which makes the *Zigzag* mentality — James Farrell's guitar replacement is "Mike Wilhelm, of Charlatans and Loose Gravel legend," according to one of their writers (legend?!!) — a little misplaced.

The even more legendary Jordan rattles off plenty of hot rock solos, but their main achievement is their integration into a dynamic replica of the Mersey sound which, you can be sure, none of the bands of that era ever actually approached onstage.

The set continues with "I'll Cry Alone", the Byrds meet the 'Pool on a good mid-tempo ballad, then their key to my heart: "Hold Me Tight", my fave obscure Beatles song. It gets unreal about now, what with this bloke looking more like Ringo every minute . . .

And on with "Please Please Me", incredibly muscular, emphasising what a great guitar part it's got, "From Me To You", and their own, er, classic, "Shake Some Action". A very good song.

The Groovies play well under an hour for the £1.60 admission, then encore with their last numbers for this tour, back to basics with Chuck Berry and Little Richard. Lights up, and Neil Young mourns out of the PA: *"Don't let it bring you down . . ."*

Somehow it feels very sad. They're a sad band, not just because of their being locked in the past (no matter how much you shake it about, a corpse is still a corpse), but also because of their seeming jinx, which manifested itself this time round in that unsightly squabble with fellow tourists The Damned (seems to be a habit of the latter's to get into headline-grabbing feuds on tour, doesn't it?).

But even as you read this the Groovies will be dusting down the drainpipes and the Chelsea boots . . . getting ready to shake some action . . . flaming on . . .

Phil McNeill

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RADIO TV

THIS WEEK's "Old Grey Whistle Test" (BBC-2 Tuesday) is devoted to film of a major event held in Macon, Georgia, which **Bob Harris** attended during the summer. Acts seen performing include the **Marshall Tucker Band, Wet Willie, Stillwater, Bonnie Bramlett, Dickie Betts** and the splinter outfit from the Allman Brothers band, **Sea Level.**

See you on the Multi-Coloured Swap Shop, dear . . .

Queen and the **Goodies** crop up in BBC-1's "Multi-Coloured Swap Shop" on Saturday morning — and remember too that the same channel is repeating "The Goodies" series on Tuesday. Over on ITV, **Slik** and the **Bay City Rollers** guest in the final **Arrows** show on Tuesday.

Films of the week are **Frank Sinatra** hi-jacking the Queen Mary in "Assault On A Queen" (ITV Thursday), the original 1932 version of "King Kong" (BBC-1 Friday), **Barbra Streisand** in "Hello Dolly" (BBC-1 Sunday) and **Richard Roundtree** in the first "Shaft" movie (BBC-1 Monday).

Radio 1 on Saturday has **Joan Armatrading** selecting her "Top Twelve", **Terry Webster and Dictionary** guesting in the final "It's Rock'n'Roll", and **Steve Gibbons Band** and **Bryn Haworth** featured "In Concert". C&W freaks won't want to miss **Marty Robbins** in "Country Club" on Radio 2 tonight (Thursday).

A reminder that you can hear the latest from NME News Desk on Radio Luxembourg at 11pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and at 9.30pm on Thursdays.

Derek Johnson

ARMATRADING: true like ice . . .

Joan Armatrading

NEW VICTORIA

OF COURSE, a point in Joan Armatrading's favour is that she is An Original.

However, as An Original and An Artist, she demands such a prior commitment that it could easily lead to uncritical sycophancy from an audience composed entirely of gaga adorers.

Joan's music, see, with its luxuriant sensuous textures and quasi-jazz and folkie strains is . . . well, I love the "Joan Armatrading" album myself. But only against my better nature. When I'm, say, having dinner with some friends it's sometimes nice to hear it playing. That sort of record.

Coffee table rock.

For people who have a bit too much money for this Age Of Austerity and buy Boz Scaggs and Phoebe Snow and the last couple of Jeff Beck albums — even though I love those too — as aural accessories rather than actually to sit and listen to for hours like you can with Lowell George.

Which, of course, is why Joan will have no problems in the States at all.

And good luck to her — that's not being disparaging. Just spotlighting the genre, that's all.

It's the female Cockney Sparrer persona actually. Bit of a female Marriott, in fact, except she doesn't move about onstage hardly at all. Just stays there with the mike, holding onto it or clutching one of the three acoustics she has up there next to her left leg.

Her voice is beautiful. Even her penchant for jazz-inflected vocal phrasing never lets her down. It sometimes seems to happen that the cynical concert-goer slips into a smirk with the first hint of the old floating octave on a couple of syllables. Joan's voice, though, is strength and confidence. It sounds pretty well hallmarked to me — especially when it's handling a line with a few metaphysical leanings, like *"I love to touch the dry land of your soul"*.

Tell you, Joan does okay on The Credibility Meter.

The set was fifty-fifty from the hit album and the first two. They loved her least chord strum, some of them, especially when she was standing there without the band with just a guitar playing "Dry Land" and "Steppin Out" from "Back To The Night". And "Love And Affection" they adored (even when it was performed as a second encore again) with the band back, and "Water With The Wine" was delightful — that's the kind of unfortunate adjective Joan encourages.

Most of the time, though, I wasn't concentrating on The Star. I just accepted what she was doing as being excellent — which the first couple of numbers established — and started digging the band, who were coming up with some stunning stuff: a beautiful lyrical guitar phrased vignette from Gerry Donahue on the Sly-influenced "People", some deluxe chord duelling from him and Albert Lee (direct from Emmylou Harris's Hot Band) on "Back To The Night", plus generally extremely high quality music from the whole band — the rest being, of course, the ace rhythm section of Dave Mattacks on drums and Pat Donaldson on bass. Mattacks and Donahue having been on the last album.

For a name session band, in fact, there's a lot of warmth in there. It's something that Joan needs, as well, that warmth. At the core of her music there's often a mood-dispelling faint chill.

Onstage at the New Victoria, though, with this band's abilities behind her, the sound contains comfort in addition to mere passion.

Okay, with all the subdivisive critical headings duly noted and with Joan suffering from my coming to the concert straight from an afternoon with "The Hissing Of Summer Lawns" and Joni's new one, she still really did get me there, you know.

Chris Salewicz

Van Der Graaf Generator

MANCHESTER

1. THE LAST DATE on the tour: the last in Britain for some time. Essentially the home do. Not too many fans present.

2. No support: they're on a long time. They play real good. Stiff, racy, fragmented, frenetic, distant, pointless.

3. The girl behind the bar pours my Coca-Cola, drops in the ice, lemon-rubbed in the tumbler, murmurs: "When the creative principle has been irrevocably worn out and the artists involved become convinced that within its limits everything has been said, the principle must be abandoned." You betcha, I return: Art not Entertainment, adventure at all times.

4. After two songs I am bored: that may be my own fault. After all, I've let myself find a way to become bored. Whose fault are the empty seats?

5. Commitment, considerable technical ability: sure, all there. Imagination? Maybe once.

6. Peter Hammill is a master of deception. Cute.

7. OK, so they're biding their time now: aren't they? Or are they stuck?

Paul Morley

HAMMILL: master of deception

NOVA (L-R): Parnell, d'Anna, Rustici, Harvey, Rossett.

Nova

LEEDS UNIVERSITY

NOVA ARE A new band, and as I chanced upon them accidentally (they were guesting with Steve Hillage) I'm not exactly the world's greatest authority on 'em — Christ, I don't even know their names. Who needs that stuff anyway? I enjoyed them, so the hell with it — bring on the dancing girls.

Musically Nova function in a zone not one million miles distant from the likes of latter-day Zappa and Weather Report, though as yet they aren't as accomplished or finely honed as either of those illustrious combos. Who is?

And talking of Frank Z, Nova's guitarist *(Corrado Rustici, that's why you didn't catch his name — Ed.)* **is a dead ringer for him from where I'm sat. He's no dragass guitar either, not as noble as the Amazing Zap, but not bad.**

But the star of the show has to be the bassman *(Doni Harvey, last witnessed with Mike Shrieve's Automatic Man — Ed.)* **who is a tall aristocratic spade who plays the meanest, most King Hell flash (a direct steal from Hunter Thompson — I wasn't going to say anything but my conscience got the better of me) bass JWH ever did hear or see.**

Compared to the aforementioned flashback duo the rest of the band — drums, keyboards, sax / flute *(Rick Parnell, Renato Rosset, Elio d'Anna, who else? — Ed.)* **— appear to be a fairly straight bunch, interesting enough, but straight. Although they are all undoubtedly fine musicians and deft soloists, when they function in basic unit roles — as band members opposed to featured soloists — things are not so fine.**

But they *are* a new band, so who knows what wonders a dose of heavy roadwork can bring about? Go to it, chaps.

John Hamblett

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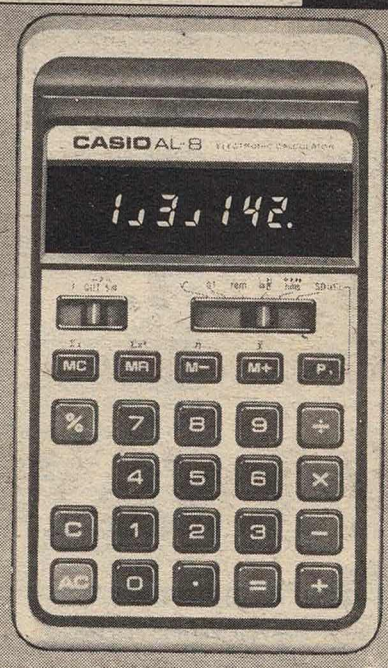

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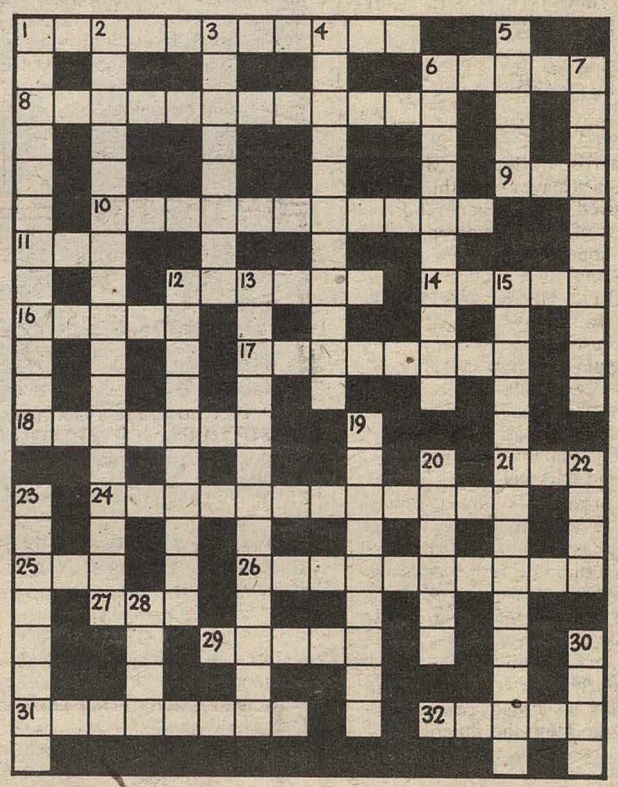

ACROSS

1 The Blackheart Man, one-time associate of Brother Bob (5, 6)
6 & 18 He was one third of short-lived, folkrock supertrio with R. Furay and J. D. Souther
8 Superwimp! (3, 9)
9 Gregory, Keith and Carl
10 See 5
11 See 23
12 A Gurvitz brother
14 Booker
16 In reverse, the one is he!
17 Sang lead on Drifters' classics such as "Save The Last Dance For Me" (3, 1, 4)
18 See 6 across
21 & 32 Of "Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah" and . . . erh . . . not much else (3, 1, 4)
24 She was a member of the Even Dozen Jug Band alongside John Sebastian, Stefan Grossman and her husband Geoff (5, 7)
25 A collection of numbers
26 *He looks pretty good but his heels are high . . .*
27 Foxy Mr. Stone
29 . . . . . Ed Davis
31 One of their hits was a rework of Joni Mitchell's "This Flight Tonight"
32 See 21

DOWN

1 "Sabotage", in late '75 was their comeback album after period of management hassles (5, 7)
2 On which, in 1973, Tina Turner gave one of her finest performances (7, 4, 6)
3 J. Tull LP (3, 5)
4 Snail friend (anag.)
5 & 10 The Asbury Duke with the E-Street Shuffle
6 Formerly mainman at CBS, he now heads his own Arista label (5, 5)
7 Lo, six pests (anag. 3, 7)
12 Canadian MOR songstress (4, 6)
13 One of three singing brothers; the others had hits in 1969 with "Where Do You Go To?" and in 1961 with "Well I Ask You" (5, 8)
15 His demons are finally out! (5, 9)
19 Cool Muses (anag.)
20 Made their debut on the rock classic, "Music In A Doll's House"
22 David / . . . . / Mink
23 & 11 Tom Dowd produced their 1976 album, "Locked In"
28 1970 Kinks 45
30 Which type of music?

ACROSS: 1 Angie Bowie; 5 Mason; 7 "Teenage Depression"; 11 Reg (Dwight); 12 "Private Number"; 14 Hello; 16 Kevin Godley; 18 "Gimme Some Lovin' "! 20 Don; 22 Linda Ronstadt; 24 Slick; 26 Rod; 28 Bob Seger; 30 Rainbow; 31 "Stranded"; 32 "Jet"; 34 Stewart; 36 John Evan; 38 Andy (Mackay); 39 Stray; 40 (Lou) Adler; 41 Lee Brilleaux.
DOWN: 1 "After The Goldrush"; 2 Gregg Allman; 3 "Beg"; 4 Queen; 6 "Stoney End"; 8 Dave Edmunds; 9 Patti (Smith); 10 Sam (Cooke); 13 UFO; 15 "One Man Band"; 17 Dana; 19 "Let's Get It On"; 21 Nick (Mason); 23 Darryl Way; 24 Sailor; 25 Cooke; 27 Daryl Hall; 29 Brenda Lee; 33 Tiny (Tim); 35 Tetsu; 36 Joan (Baez); 37 Earl (Slick).

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Andy Fairweather Low

GLASGOW

EARLIER THIS YEAR, and in this very city, the Andy Fairweather Low band completed a successful British tour with a set which, besides being excellent in its own right, proved beyond doubt that a Yesterday Pop Idol could graduate beyond being merely a '70s hitmaker to become a gifted and entertaining stage performer.

Time, however, may have eroded certain qualities in him and his quartet, because nine months on the Fair Boys just don't cut it with the same expertise or flourish. Musically this act leaves something to be desired, and the general dreariness of the act is compounded by appalling acoustics and an abysmal light show.

Quite where they're going wrong is hard to determine because — apart from a few selections from his new album, "Be Bop'n'Holla", including "Checking Out The Checker", "I Can't Take Much More" and "Shimmie-Doo-Wah-Sae" — the material is familiar.

Certainly the atmosphere of the City Hall (which could have possibly doubled as a dungeon in bygone days) is not conducive to their style.

B.J. Cole sweats over his pedal steel, but unfortunately the results aren't audible. And similarly Fairweather has to torture his already raw vocal to emerge from the dampness of the bass and organ sound. Quite suddenly Henry Spinetti's drums also lose their positive edge.

But the problem with their show lies a little deeper than that. At least, on this one performance, they're restricting their potential. Whereas before they had an ambivalent approach, and could rock-'n'roll with the best and then turn their attention to the mellower aspects of their style, now they seem only able to do the latter with any degree of success.

This could be because Low is no whizz on electric guitar and bassist John David, wearing a head scarf and looking like a thoroughly nasty pirate, prefers to hang back rather than provide the thrust rock needs from a bassist. Similarly keyboardsmith Mick (Wyder K. Frogg) Weaver tends to become indulgent when the pace is uptempo.

In any case, these two have the unhappy bearing of being press-ganged onto the stage — which might explain a lot.

The band do excell in creating the sinister swamp music mood for "La Booga Rooga", and later, with "Travellin' Light", "Champagne Melody" and "Wide Eyed And Legless", their tone is gentle and relaxed. With this material Cole and Weaver consistently play off one another and, combined with Fair's melodic vocals, create a style that is best described as Cole Porter meets J.J. Cale.

Another high point of their set is the brisk, electric skiffle of "Putting On The Style", a version which wouldn't be out of place on Barefoot Jerry's "Key To The Country" album.

Unfortunately there's not enough of this kind of quality in the set. Sadly, a comparatively short time ago they were a lot better.

Tony Stewart

Drifters

EDINBURGH

WHAT A WEIRD experience. How do I begin to convey it? I'm sitting in this theatre watching this apparently ageless group, led by Mr. Drifter Johnny Moore, go through their routine. Behind them sit a 17-piece orchestra in evening dress. Everything sung has been a hit, someone else's or their own oldies and custom-built new oldies. They've had more hits than the Fairport Convention's had line-ups.

Off they go again, all smiles in their impeccable white suits and non-tangle action dancing. They're real professionals. Even the comedy bits are perfectly timed routines. So routine, in fact, that they're not trying at all. There are some bum notes so glaring that even I notice them. And the patter! Get a load of this.

"I'm told the people of Edinburgh REALLY get down!" Best joke of the night, unintentional or not. The day the people of Edinburgh get even half way down, it'll be the end of civilisation as we know it.

"Save The Last Dance For Me" now. "Let's find out how OLD you are," they say. "ANCIENT!" screams the teeny behind me and she and her pal double up with laughter at this sparkling witticism. But she's right. Only a few hard core teenies are under thirty in this audience, for whom remembering is the name of the game. And then there's me, somewhere in the middle, just weirded out.

The support act were Christian. No, not another God Squad — something much worse. Somebody has exhumed Chris McClure to sing Sedaka medleys and Leo Sayer covers. Unspeakably painful. I though the Geneva Convention had outlawed that sort of thing. Flashback to Saturday night at the ole International, featuring the Chris McClure Section and yours truly on under age drinking. Oh yeah, and under age being incredibly sick in the bog afterwards as well. Listen, the past isn't all it's cracked up to be!

Ian Cranna

JIMMY DA VIES of Alkatraz: is he eating it or playing it ... or is it eating him?

Alkatraz

GUILDFORD

ALKATRAZ, of course, all have flu like Welsh bands always seem to do.

Also like most Welsh bands — including, I suppose, even Budgie — the visitor to the live Alkatraz performance finds that it is necessary to . . . uhh . . . *get into it.* For some this often necessitates a certain closing of the eyelids. And if this proves necessary then, of course, it must be done.

After all, it's all fine practice for Man, whom Alkatraz are supporting here in Guildford tonight with seven more gigs to go on the Man farewell tour. The "farewell tour" bit should explain why the not quite sold out audience approaches the evening with some of the solemnity of a wake.

Alkatraz are former Manner Will Youatt on Gibson and James Davies from Quicksand on lead, with the rhythm section of Jeff Inger on bass and Stuart Halliday on drums from the Neutrons. Naturally they're on UA.

"Two-thirds melodic song with a bit of a blow for the other third," is approximately how Will sums up what the band are doing after the show. You will probably be pleased to hear that even when they're not supporting and play their full two-hour set, Alkatraz don't just *s-t-r-e-t-c-h* it all out like the band that's topping, but actually add approximately the same number of songs again.

Basically they're a guitar band with an excellent meat pie and potatoes drummer in Very Rich In His Own Right Halliday and fine bass playing from Singer — his Bobby Fuller Four bass riff on "Zen Cookies" is really quite stirring.

An air of casual confidence surrounds them. In the dressing-room afterwards Halliday remarks that tonight was one of the first gigs on the tour that really felt like the audience thought of them as just the support act.

You wouldn't have known that from the stalls, though. Of course, early '70s San Francisco is definitely the mode of dress — loon pants, bandanas, army shirts — and, to some extent, the obvious influences like Quicksilver are there. But Will's melodic soloing underlining the almost accapella harmonies on their single, "Nito Bendito," is particularly memorable, as is the whole of "Living In The World Today," the opening and best track off the first Neutrons album.

And as indeed is the final number, "Night And Day," which begins with the phased guitars having a long, slow, stoned rap with each other, becoming a vortex of swarming sound from all four instruments, before they scatter and dive straight for some kind of stoned Welsh pastoral feel.

Even the lead vocals are phased. James — or is it Jimmy? — has a passably powerful high-ish voice that's as delicate as the band could get away with. Which means it's about as delicate as Dennis Waterman. He uses a voice-box just like Frampers.

Oh yes. That title "Zen Cookies."

"Well, you know, me an' 'im were in The Milky Way in Amsterdam and we ate these 'ash cookies. And there was this French band Ange on doing this number about babies turning green in their graves. And we freaked, man. Couldn't get out of the bleedin' place. Couldn't find the exits. Our faces is white as sheets. An' we run back to where we're stayin' best way we can.

"Then we each slept for fourteen hours. So we thought, 'Ah. Zen cookies.' Don't know anything about Zen really, though."

Thanks, Will.

Chris Salewicz

ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN ON THE TOWN

FLASHES

HELLO AND welcome to the German-nation Game! Ready? Here's what you do.

Pretend you're a German, get angry because you think **SUTHERLAND BROTHERS AND QUIVER** are a pop group covering Rod Stewart's "Sailing", and hurl a beer can spiked with nails at the band to see if you can dent their morale. Right, off you go!

Now it's your turn, S B & Q. You're playing a gig at Edinburgh University — let's see how you do! "Dark Powers" dedicated to the Germans? Cheeky! So-so performance but never mind — Tim's solo's worth a twirl, worth a twirl!

Right, my loves, let's look at the scoreboard. How did they do, Anthea? S B & Q 4, Germans 0. Good game, good game!

Ian Cranna

SBQ: Willie Wilson, Iain/Gavin Sutherland — from now on we're staying here!

IT'S HARD to be objective about comedy — it's hell hard for a hot blood human to be objective about most things — but comedy, that's double hard bordering on the impossible. Either it makes you laugh or, it doesn't. **MIKE HARDING'S** particular brand of soft core ethnic humour doesn't make me laugh.

Not that MH would've noticed that. On Friday he was playing to a gang of fanatic disciples. Bugger me if they weren't laughing and shouting for more before he even opened his mouth.

Boring/hilarious yarns of a poverty stricken childhood. Same-ish/funny as hell jokes on same topic. Mundane/side-splitting comedy songs. Straight folk songs. It all depends, I suppose.

John Hamblett

THE YOUNG bands keep coming: **SOUNDER** are a teenage outfit out of darkest Pimlico, London, who take Marley and latterday Stones as their roots, and add more than a dash of their own refreshingly original creativity. They blew a fiery set at downtown Islington's exotic bohemian hostelrie, The King's Head, t'other Friday, combining standouts like "Time Waits For No One" and "Johnny Was" (which sounds better for their uptempo treatment) with a couple of impressive self-penned pieces like "Rolling On." They have a Keef lookalike rhythm player, a lead who throws in startling lumps of Hank B., and in Ozzie Ozell (congas, vocals, macho) a compelling front runner. All they need is time and lots of work.

Neil Spencer

CAN·OPENER

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Can

MANCHESTER

IN ONE OF the most glorious cases of mismatching ever seen on a British stage, Can are preceded tonight by an agonisingly kitsch comedy jug-band called Brownsville Banned, whose act is approximately as subtle as the pun in their name: bum-flashes, smutty postcard humour, etc., the sort of debacle which makes you realise just how good the Bonzos were.

The audience, however, give them an enthusiastic and probably inebriated reception. Some people's meat, I guess.

Equipment troubles delay Can a while, but when they finally reach the stage they settle somewhat haphazardly into their warm-up number, proceeding, it seems, without Holger Czukay, who fiddles around stage left with his modest array of tape machines and boxes of tricks for a while.

IRMIN SCHMIDT

Seems to be a fault somewhere.

The tune builds up into a typical Can rhythmic structure, pushed along by Jaki Liebezeit's impeccably restrained drumming, with Irmin Schmidt karate-chopping his Farfisa organ, sending stuttering shards of percussive organ-notes skittering back and forth across Michael Karoli's heavily sustained guitar phrases.

Karoli's appearance is bizarre: eyes clenched, face blank, zomboid as those real-life extras in *Cuckoo's Nest*, searching, presumably, for that elusive plane where information is rendered only in sound. He appears to be slightly surprised when the piece draws to a close, flashing a bemused smile in the audience's direction and withdrawing to adjust his amplifier.

Indeed, Can as a whole come across as a surprisingly visual band; each member's idiosyncracies endlessly interesting on their own or in a unit with the others. One guy in front of the stage, in fact, never lets his attention wander from Liebezeit for over half the set; when was the last time *you* were utterly engrossed by a drummer, to the exclusion of all else?

The next piece begins with a taped introduction of diverse sounds including the odd bit of babbled German (a radio?), with which Schmidt combines some showers and sparks of electronically-generated sound. The rest of the band joined in only when necessary, and eventually the basic motif from "Dizzy Dizzy" comes into prominence, to be used as a stepping-stone to further improvisation.

Rosko Gee copes remarkably well on bass, faced as he is with the almost insurmountable task of gelling with a group of musicians, the emphathic nature of whose music is so intense they claim to communicate telepathically on stage. Top-hat bobbing as he jigs funkily along, he stretches and moulds the bass line as the music shifts through its phases, occasionally instigating changes when he believes the time is right; more often than not, successfully.

A far more demanding role, surely, than his part in the overblown "Go" project.

The next piece takes as its base the "I Want More" theme, complete with the "... and more" chant (courtesy Czukay and Schmidt), the only time the otherwise redundant microphones are used. More of that staccato organ, an agitated, smiling Schmidt pushing his specs back up the bridge of his nose every few seconds until he finally discards them for good.

Another fast, choppy number, then "Cascade Waltz", Liebezeit embellishing the standard 3/4 waltz time with some fussy little hi-hat and snare work, metronomically precise internal rhythms expanding the piece from within. Fascinating.

The last number, vaguely decipherable as "Moonshake", is drawn to a somewhat premature close shortly after the house lights are switched on. It appears that tempus has fugited enough to rule an encore out of the question. A pity, since tonight's five extended work-outs have but whetted the audience's appetite: this stuff can be addictive, you know . . .

Andy Gill

Split Enz

BRIGHTON

A TRIP TO the sea end of Wardour Street is always fine by me, so Tuesday found me on the Chrysalis bus to Brighton to see a small night-club audience watch a seven-piece loony band perform rather self-conscious antipodean strangeness beneath half a geodesic dome.

The group combine quite-good progressive rock with a stage act which resembles a cross between *Mother Goose* and *The Persecution And Assassination of Marat Under The Direction Of The Marquis De Sade*.

Every group has a cult audience somewhere, and the jerky white-face, puppet-like movements of Split Enz encourage a robotic, pretend half-wit type of dancing — complete with staring eyes and a touch of drool on the chin.

Their act is so visual that you really have to close your eyes in order to concentrate on the music. Beneath the energy and the occasional manic power drive — often delivered by a bass player who's a bit like a demented Buddy Holly — there is a curious colonial gloom, often expressed in the lyrics more than the music, though present more as a feeling than explicitly.

"I'm Beginning To Wonder" placed this sad quality in time like a 1938 French movie. The mime in whiteface. Same thing that Dylan was doing in the Rolling Thunder Review.

NOEL CROMBIE & EDWARD RAYNER caught in mid-spoon solo

When one of the audience began to squeal back at them, other paying customers escorted him to the side of the dance floor — which was a shame because if the audience can't join in, then the group's elaborate fancy dress only helps to build a barrier between them and the audience.

On "Nightmare Stampede" they sounded a bit like Genesis or 10cc. My favourite bit was Noel Crombie's spoons solo in which he was suddenly galvanised into action like the scarecrow in *The Wizard Of Oz* or some dreadful uncle at a Christmas party who only knows one party trick and goes completely over the top with it.

Crombie pranced across the stage giving us some of the best EPNS I've heard in years. (*This apparently is a spoons playing joke — Ed.*)

Any group dedicated enough to shave their hair into weird shapes must have something going for them. I'm not exactly sure what it is — they're not avant garde, as has sometimes been claimed — but they certainly are interesting.

Miles

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I AM amused — if not a trifle bemused — by the National Press attack on *NME*. Several times in the past I have read articles in various papers which incorporated abusive language. The word "wanker" appeared twice (in italics) on the back page of the *Daily Express*, but that was written off (no pun intended) as an explanation of why George Best (God bless him) was sent off in a match against Southampton. How many people will have read that compared to a copy of *NME?* Is there no justice?

More recently, however, we have that example to all Christians — Dana. In one paper she slangs the *NME* for not being suitable for decent people and then appears topless in the *Daily Mirror* (very tasty all the same and a pity the nipples weren't included). Even more despicable is the way *NME* even associates itself with those anti-social of all anti-socials — The P*nk Rockers. No sooner do you stop using the word "P*nk" the nationals are full of them. One Sunday paper even included an article about the guy who tattooed Cher's bum — weeks behind the *NME*. So is *NME* a paper which is disgusting, abusive and a threat to the youth today? Or is it just because it's weeks ahead with news, that other media feel embarrassed? — *EVIL TED, Winchester.*

● **Quite serious, that, Chief. This one's even more serious. — CSM**

MOST PEOPLE would agree that music has reached an all time low. I feel the music media is responsible to a large degree for this. Each week your paper contains less and less about music, spending more of its space on theatrics, punk rock being the greatest example. These 'bands' are merely entertainers who use music, their prime objective to entertain, not produce music and as such should be classed with magicians, jugglers, comedians etc., not musicians whose prime objective is music. So please can you move your focus from theatrics to music and shame these "musicians" into thinking about the "music" they play. Back in the late 60's only the music counted and what an era that was, now music seems to be the least important factor in a band. So stop printing all this irrelevant rubbish and give music back the respect it deserves. *R. HYNES, Aston, Birmingham.*

● **Yeah, Townshend smashing his axe. Jim Morrison doing "The End", Jimi Hendrix burning his Strat . . . it was so lovely in the theatrics-free '60s. — SOME OLD HIPPY SCHLUMPFED OUT IN THE CORNER.**

Hi boys.

I can't help noticing that with the emergence of the Pistols et al a certain word has been subjected to ruthless abuse by the various media. I refer, of course to anarchy. Contrary to the popular misconception, anarchy does not mean chaos, indiscriminate violence, senseless outrage and destruction. Anarchism is an ideal of order without government, peace without coercion. Any dictionary will tell you that the word anarchy simply describes a state of being without a ruler and as such should be the ultimate goal of any rational civilization.

That's all for today, kiddies.

AN ETYMOLOGY FAN, no address given.

● **That's *all?* — CSM**

HOW DARE you make fun of Dana as you did last week! Do you *have* to make everything sound dirty and cheap? Dana is, in my mind, one of the only things in the music business worth listening to. I don't know what you said about her going to LA and so long as I don't find out I don't care. *S. CULLEN, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts.*

● **'Course we don't have to make everything dirty and cheap — HIDEOUS BILL GANGRENE**

I'M SURE you'll get lots of letters condemning Mr. N.M.E. Reader's judgement on your silly paper, but I for one couldn't agree more with him. I've been getting NME regularly since 1967 through its "new look" in early 1972, and I think it's a shadow of its former self. Admittedly it's still great for information about concerts and recording news, but I don't find as much to read in the present 56 pages as in the 12 or 16 of 1967 (maybe that's why I spend half my time reading old NME's).

I wouldn't go as far as Mr. Reader in saying that the paper is "prepared by fools who try to hide their ignorance", but I do think that you cater for a very minority audience. I'm not a teenybopper, as I wrote an equally critical letter to *"Record Mirror"* (which never got published). I suppose what I really want is something in between, a paper that recognises that all kinds of music are good in their own way.

My second point concerns the use of four letter words in NME. You say that they reflect the artists' life-styles, which is fair enough, but I often find that these words are used out of context, i.e. obscene in the real sense of the word. I didn't read the article in the *"Sunday People"* myself, although I see your point about the paper's hypocrisy in condemning obscenity on the one hand and exploiting it on the other. But obviously some of the idiots whose letters you printed hadn't read it either (or had forgotten what it said). "Rastus" mocked Cliff Richard's and Dana's comments on the paper, but in the reproduction what Dana said was obliterated except for a few words. As Cliff Lee showed in his letter, she was *defending* the paper. I'm not a fan of Dana's — I just like to get things straight.

I think you waste a lot of space with esoteric jokes and pathetic letters, half of which I'm sure you write yourselves. I strongly criticised the new NME when it first came out, and my letter was published but cut to a mere 35 words, which made it seem as though I was complaining about the new singles reviews. Was this so that you could accommodate idiot and irrelevant letters, like those by "I. Sharpe" and "Smudger" in this week's NME? — *HOWARD PIZZEY, Cardiff.*

● **This letter has been cut because it is long and boring. Come to that, so's this one. — CSM.**

QUOTE FROM T. Parsons' review of S.P.'s etc.: "If the pious hypocrites who rule our land ban this tour from your town get off your lazy butt, go to the next town, or even the next town, until you get the chance to check it out." Good advice, sure. But Christ, Parsons is OLD! We don't want him at S.P. gigs! Sure he got excited, sure he wants to see the music scene get off its own "lazy butt," but what does he do about it? Writes his article, gets his wage, buys his velvet jacket or whatever, wishes the S.P's all the luck in the world, and — nothing. I know it's your job, squire, but just don't think you're doing punk any favours. Articles we've got, what we need is ACTION! — *DUNK THE PUNK, East Ham.*

● **Two years older than the Pistols themselves is *old?* If youth worship is what you're into, sunshine, then you better stick to Lena Zaveroni. And I don't know any kids involved in this scene who call themselves "punks." Your credentials, or lack of them, are showing, squire. . T.P.**

● **Dunk The Punk is 28. Tony Parson is 17. This sentence contains previously issued material and artificial flavouring. — CSM.**

WHY IS IT that when tickets are supposed to go on sale on the 3rd of December, they go on sale on the 27th of November instead? I am referring to the sale of GENESIS tickets at MANCHESTER. In your issue of the 13th, it said the 3rd, but on arriving at Manchester on said day after travelling from Sheffield, we saw a bloody great sign saying the tickets were sold out. It wouldn't have been so bad, but it was 12.45 am, so we had to wait about 5½ hours in sub-zero temperatures for the next train home.

It's alright printing in Manchester papers when the tickets will be on sale, but we're the wrong side of the bloody Pennines. It cost us a lot of pennies on the train, not to mention severe frostbite and a sleepless night. I tried beforehand to ring up the hall, but nobody was ever in. I hope the hall burns down. — *DAS, Sheffield.*

● **Certain theatre box offices have an unfortunate habit of opening in advance of official dates, specially when there's heavy demand. In the case of Genesis at Manchester, NME stated that postal bookings would also be accepted, and it seems the venue sold out on the strength of mail orders alone. They should, however, have retained some for personal callers — particularly as a box-office opening date had been specified. Black mark, Free Trade Hall. It was originally intended to sell Rod's Olympia tickets to personal applicants only, but bookings were subsequently switched to mail order — as Miss A.V. would know if she had read our October 30 issue, when we printed full details of the address to write to. —D.J.**

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE or not, your December 11th issue contained an overdose of Julie Burchill. I'm a broad-minded bloke really, but seven articles in one week by this pretentious lady (?) tries my allegiance to your publication beyond the limits even of the broad-minded. Why doesn't she drop the journalistic persona, admit she's just a 30 year old pseudo freak playing at being a rebel, and give us some straight reviews and unaffected commentaries? I am not a Carpenters fan, nor a member of the Young Conservatives. — *BIG MALC - A Hill In Kent. P.S. I like Barclay James Harvest though.*

● ***That's almost as bad. Julie? — CSM.***

● **As I won't be 21 until 1980 I tend to have a larger creative output than anyone else around here. I think hills in Kent are really where it's at, Moonbeam. — J.B.**

ENOUGH of this Punk Rock. A new movement, resurrecting the be-bop of Charlie "Yardbird" Parker and injecting reggae and Afro-rhythms to give the world stikki music. Prime exponenents of this kind of music are the excellent (though relatively unknown) Bloobo, and I for one would like to see articles on bands such as this. — *JACKIE "SMIKE" BEARD, Hoxton, London, N.1*

● **I for one would like to see less letters on bands such as this — THE EMPEROR CALIGULA.**

Does all the fuss about Dole Queue rock and advances from EMI and the demand for this brand of music mean that with national tours, the groups have to return home weekly to sign on? — *JOE TURNER, Twickenham.*

● **Probably — CSM.**

DEAR DOC, every week I have this amazing "trip" an' it makes me think I'm readin' a music paper. Jeez, I must be going crazy. — *DAZED AND CONFUSED, Tottenham.*

● **I and I think maybe both of you are — CSMs.**

LAST FRIDAY I saw Henry Cooper on the appalling Russell Harty Show. He was singing a song called "Knock Me Down With A Feather", which I believe is his first single. A few days later I heard a group called the Sex Pistols singing their new record "Anarchy in the U.K." on the radio. My mum prefers Henry Cooper. But me, well, was I imagining the whole thing or do I need a lobotomy? *Confused, London W.12.*

● **That's better, confused. Now you've got rid of dazed, you'll find that you only need *one* lobotomy. Please don't hesitate to write again. — CSM.**

I WEAR a nut and bolt through my neck. Am I a punk-rocker?
FRANK N. STEIN, Birmingham.

● **Naw, you're just another little monster — GRENDEL THE TROLL.**

IF I say that the NME is an interesting, nicely laid out journal containing objective reviews and fine articles by well-trained journalists, will you sue me for slander? — *NIBBLY NORRIS EARTHWORM, Haslemere Reptile Cage, Surrey.*

● **Will you kiss my ass? - PROFESSOR A. J. BARTLETT-PEAR.**

● **Professor - I'm surprised at you! - HIDEOUS BILL GANGRENE.**

● **I'm sorry, my boy, I just don't know what gets into me sometimes. - PROFESSOR A. J. BARTLETT-PEAR.**

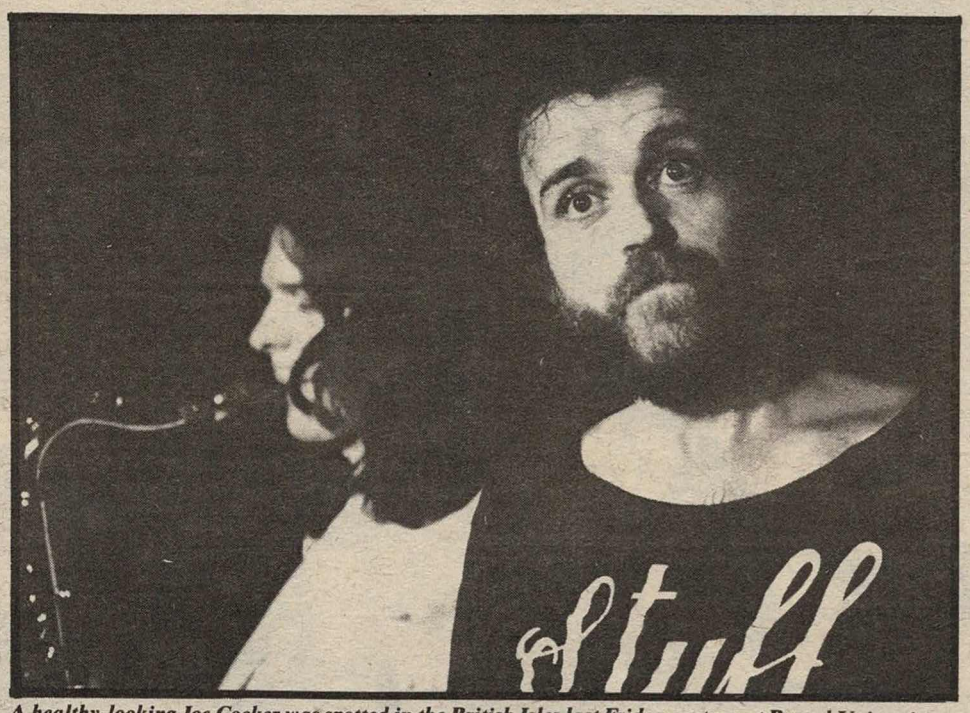
It's a good job that Radio Luxembourg played Queen's new record, "A Day At The Races", because if they hadn't I might have been a big enough fool to have bought it.
RICHARD EVELEIGH, Broomfleet, Brough, N. Humberside.

● **I wouldn't go round admitting that kind of thing if I were you, matey. — CSM.**

Edited by CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY

TEAZERS

A WEEKLY CONJUGATION



A healthy-looking Joe Cocker was spotted in the British Isles last Friday onstage at Brunel University with Kokomo. Joseph, who'd been rehearsing with the Kokes earlier in the day, joined the band for the second half of their set. It is believed the chaps may work together again in the near future. Good year for Taureans, Joe. Pic: ADRIAN BOOT

RESOUNDINGLY demonstrating to the world that **Keef's** marbles remain thoroughly intact is the splendid (sic) news that Mr Rock'n'Roll (sic) has been in the studios recording *a Christmas single*. Chuck Berry's "Run, Run Rudolph" is the cut in question, which features a joanna-ing **Ian Stewart** and lead vocals by Mr Richard. No other Stones were present on the session. Unfortunately, however, Keef didn't quite get it together in time to make the Xmas schedules, so "Run, Run Rudolph" is just going to have to wait for 1977. Good going, Keef . . .

Greeenwich Village folk singer **Bob Dylan** is obviously into check shirts and plimsolls at the moment. El Zim paid a backstage visit to **Rory Gallagher's** dressing-room at the New York Shrine. His innocuous appearance in the face of such giants of charisma as our Rory led to the New York property owner being refused entrance. He was already splitting when a Chrysalis employee copped a rear view of the famous skull and insisted that Rory would love to see him for a Guinness after all . . .

You should have been there, my dear. At London's country music nightspot, the Nashville (Rooms), on Friday when there was such a *to do*. Former **Cafe Society** man **Tom Robinson,** launching his own band, dedicated "Tired Of Waiting" to the in-audience **Ray Davies.** Sensitive Ray, taking this as a jibe at him for only having got out one Cafe Society album in the two and a half years they were signed to his Konk label, began yelling at Robinson and left in high dudgeon flashing peace signs. Just like the Scotch Of St James all over again, isn't it now . . .

What do we do with the son of a lame duck? Well why don't we put **Jack Ford** — son of the **Gerry Ford** who's got the removal men in — to work writing about his drug experiences in *High Times* ,the US dope consumers monthly. On your news-stands soon, kids . . .

The Sultress of Dirge, Nico, seen at a recent Noo Yawk **John Cale** gig after emerging from her Arizona commune retreat . . .

Healthy, clean-living **Frank Sinatra** cancelled out a recording session in the US when he heard **Television** playing in the adjoining studio . . .

Talking of **Television,** Stiff record star (get you, sweetie) **Richard Hell** has this to say about shades, man. Like, you know man, Richard always wears purple shades, man. Like they cut out those yellows, man. Yellow rilly bums out Richard. Rilly, But he finds it tough getting taxi-cabs in NY . . .

Uhhh . . . Talking of Television, man, have you ever watched like *Hawaii Five-O* in colour with the sound turned down when you're stoned, man? But it makes it tough getting taxi-cabs in London, man. . .

Hey, man, like **John Entwistle** of **The Who,** man, you know what he's gone and done? Yeah, he's kinda fixed up these two drinking bottles — kinda like racing cyclists drinking bottles — onto his mike stand so's he can take a hit of Southern Comfort or white wine whenever he feels like it during a Who set. Yeah, you know, he told the *Sunday People* last weekend that he used to do a lot of drugs you know. "I took tranquilisers, uppers and sleeping pills like some folk slip down aspirins. I had two LSD experiences and after the first I vowed never again. But someone spiked a Scotch at a party. To avoid the hell I went through on the first trip I locked myself in a toilet with a bottle of Scotch determined to get so drunk I'd pass out. After a while I thought I might be sick and stuck my head out of the window and passed out. When I came to I was in a state and my hair was white. Pigeons nesting above the window had 'bombed' me through the night" . . .

And actress **Linda Blair**, 17, of *Exorcist* fame — moves on to actor **Helmet Berger**, 32, only weeks after friends were forecasting her being trothed to Deep Purple's **Glen Hughes** . . .

Radio Luxembourger top DJ — and former Caroline man — **Tony Prince** suspended for couple of days after he refused to pre-record an inverview with . . . yes, right first time . . . **Les Pistoles.** So it's no *Sun* and *Mirror* front page for TP . . .

The Bee Gees netted thirty thousand bucks for the Police Athletic League when they played Madison Square Gardens . . .

Sunday Times readers may have been as appalled as *T-zers* was to note 'Music Writer' **Derek Jewell** giving the colour supplement readers his Pick Of The Year last weekend. Though his actual choice was predictably and numbskullingly locked into those elpees that sweep away the dark ages of music etc etc, his "near-misses" included such lamentable turkeys as **"Wings** At The Speed Of Sound" and **The Beach Boys'** "15 Big Ones." **Camel** are apparently "a symphonic rock band still under-regarded" and "the new band formed by **Rick Wakeman,** allegedly to rival **Emerson, Lake and Palmer,** should be something too."

Anyway, *T-zers* understands that though The Man With The Golden Paunch, **R. Wakeman,** is now back amongst the brown rice, it Should Not Be Ruled Out — though It's Not Definitely On The Cards — that **R. Wakeman, B. Bruford** and **J. Wetton** may still work together as a recording unit sometime in the future...

See, **Ron Wood** is doing the **Stones** some musical good: **Mick Jagger's** just spent two days playing harp and singing background with bluesman **Luther Allison** at PS Studios on the Chicago Southside. "Weren't a dull moment from beginning to end — just like playing in a good bar," Luther told *Rolling Stone*. "Mick's beautiful and he's way into the blues." The two met through Wood, who heard Luther play in San Trope last summer . . .

"**Bob** (**Johnson**, the producer) is very keen on elf ballads and goblins and things of that nature, all rather Tolkienesque. The songs I find are slightly more earthy, and degenerate somewhere around the fourth verse into an orgy of sex or drink." **Maddy Prior** in *Rolling Stone* . . .

It is reported that one Noo Yawk paper felt that the party following Peter Frampton's recent Madison Square Garden gigs looked like a funeral for a recording company executive. What a strange thing to feel . . .

Tracks on next **Ramones** LP due for January release include "Commando", "Shock Treatment", "Sally Is A Headbanger", "Swallow My Pride", "Carbona Hot Glue" and "I Remember You" . . .

Patti Smith really does appear to have terminal Blackmore's Disease. She has apparently selected producer Jimmy Lovine — who engineered and mixed "Born To Run" — for her third elpee, "Rock'n'Roll Nigger", because it was Jimmy alone who sussed the lines which, in La Smith's opinion, most represent the crux of her "Radio Ethiopia" album: "Turn god/like a dervish/turn around Lord make a move/turn turn/I don't get nervous/oh i just move in another dimension". "To me," quoth Patti, "it's the greatest line in rock'n'roll. It's my challenge to God. I wanna be God's daughter. No . . . his mistress, that's better."

Oh Gawd. Asylum Records would appear to have no shame whatsoever. They've sent out promotional blue cotton hankerchiefs with "Here Come Those Tears Again,,' **Jackson Browne's** sad song about his wife, printed on one corner . . .

Mick Ronson recording in Woodstock with **David Cassidy** and **Ricky Fataar** . . .

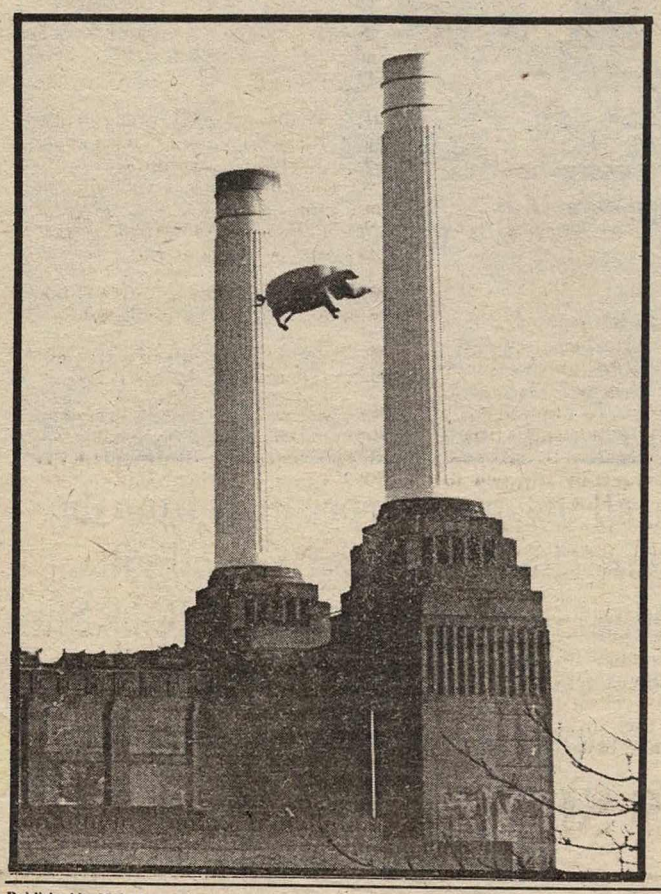
The **Nitty Gritty Dirt Band** album, "Dirt, Silver and Gold" — a triple compilation of ten years of material — currently available on import for £7.50. In February it will get its official British release on UA. It will cost £8.25 Huh?

At **Linda Lewis's** closing night at Ronnie Scott's, who should be in the audience but Prancin' **Rudie Nureyev.** Dashing Rudie went backstage and spent hours chatting with The Star. Handing out a few stage movement tips, *T-zers* expects . . .

Frampton calling and coming up for the second time in *T-zers* today. It seems that the Face Of '76 has an exclusive merchandising company called Bandana Merchandise. Bandana promotes and sells Frampton ephermera like T-shirts, posters, iron-on transfers and the like. Two New York retail outlets have already been sued by Bandana for one million dollars for selling unauthorised wall posters, two more suits are currently in the New York Supreme Court and in each case a claim of half a million in actual damages and the same in punitive damages is claimed. More cases are in the offing. **Dee Anthony,** Frampton's manager, has vowed to stamp out illegal exploitation of his golden boy wherever it occurs. You have been warned . . .

Jobworths at the Civic Arena in Pittsburgh who work in rock shows have been awarded "hazardous duty" payments as part of a new pay deal. This follows numerous attacks against employees during rock binges. Who says rock and roll isn't dangerous?

Latest report from the Crown Estate Commissioners indicates that the cost to the taxpayers of the Watchfield 1975 Festival including police costs was more than £22,000. Free festivals, man. For the people. By the people.



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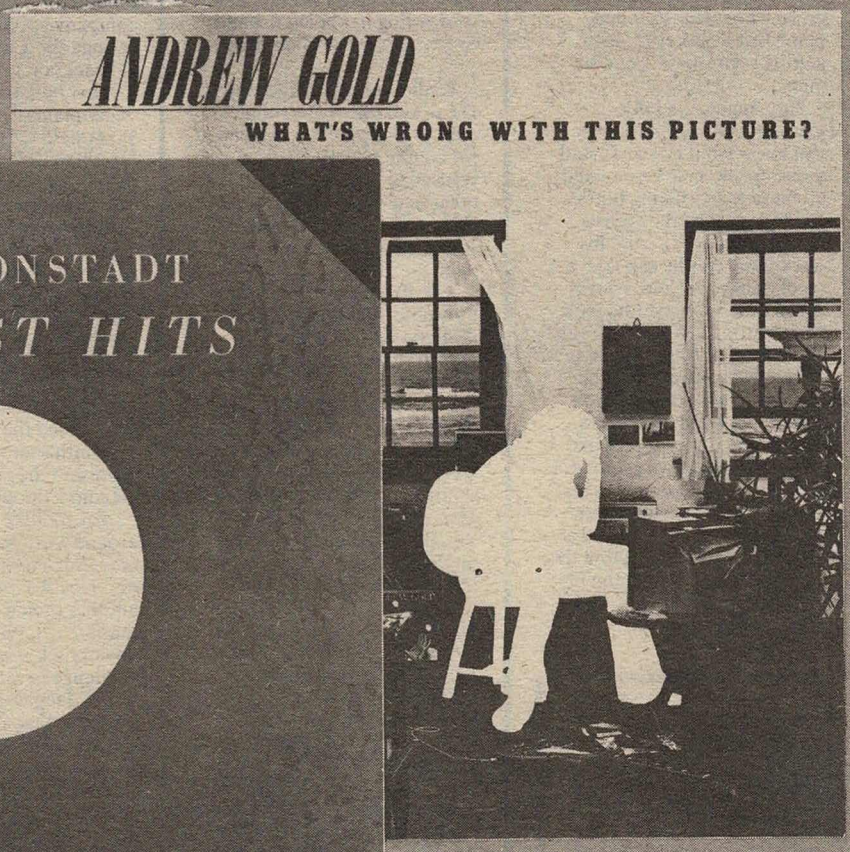

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